APRIL 1950

COMMENTARY

The American Credo Survives the Modern Crisis — GOLO MANN

Is Egypt Planning a Second Round? — BRIAN FAULKNER

The Postwar Revival of the Synagogue — WILL HERBERG

Saving Asia for Democracy — SIDNEY HERTZBERG

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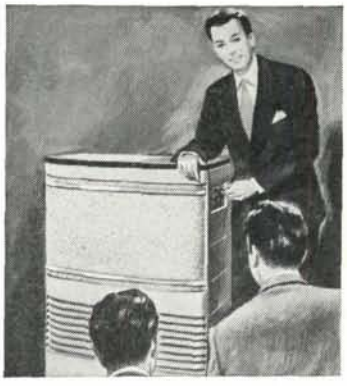

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COMMENTARY

THE AMERICAN CREDO SURVIVES THE MODERN CRISIS

The "Great Exception" in a New Version

GOLO MANN

OF LATE it has become customary to consider the United States a conservative country—even the most conservative, the one remaining conservative country. In the words of a brilliant young historian: "From some standpoints the United States looks like the relic of an old society stranded in a new one. In the tormented postwar world the United States has emerged as the home of true conservatism."

There is something shocking and immensely paradoxical in this description of the United States as conservative, indeed as "archaic" (H. Stuart Hughes uses this term) —this country which was for so long the asylum of revolutionaries and the despair of kings, the country in which Tocqueville saw in 1832 what Lincoln Steffens saw in Russia ninety years later: a society without a past, but presenting the universally valid pattern of the future. Instead of the old cities and monuments of Europe, America, when it entered the scene of history, possessed the new, vast democratic kingdoms of recreation and adventure; the deserts, the mountain ranges, and forests of the West. America was all future and no past. Here, conservatism never really could develop, because there was nothing to look backward to.

Indeed, conservatism in America has been, in most cases, nothing but frozen revolution, 18th- or 19th-century liberalism petrified. It has had little to do with Burke's sentimental love for the past, with the cool and sad wisdom of Tocqueville, with the agonized cultural anxieties and bitter warnings of Jacob Burckhardt. When Burckhardt's *Reflections on World History* were published in New York in 1943, they were unmercifully taken apart by a great Republican daily as a product of a viciously anti-democratic and pessimistic mind! I also remember the

---

FOR native and immigrant alike America meant something unique in world history; it is a uniqueness that Americans have taken pride in, and Europeans acknowledged. But now, at the very moment when the United States is the premier world power, many Americans and Europeans find themselves doubtful of the viability of the American credo: where once there was hope and confidence there is widespread pessimism and cynicism about "the American promise." However, as GOLO MANN here points out, this need not be; the American credo still possesses untapped sources of vitality, and American uniqueness may yet be the foundation for a universal humanistic politics. Mr. Mann is associate professor of history at Claremont Men's College in California. He was born in Germany and studied at the Universities of Berlin, Paris, and Heidelberg, receiving from this last a PhD in philosophy and history. Mr. Mann came to this country in 1940, was naturalized in 1943, and served three years with the American Army in Europe. He is the author of *Secretary of Europe: The Life of Friedrich Gentz* (Yale, 1946).

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irreverent laughter of a group of California students—who considered themselves conservatives—when they read Burke's lamentation on the death of chivalry. Instinctively they mistrusted Burke and sided with Tom Paine, with the European who had broken with the past as against the true European conservative. And was not every European immigrant in the 19th century—regardless of avowed political ideology—an incarnate protest against the Old World?

IT HAS often been observed, recently by Myrdal and by Hofstadter and only yesterday by Hughes, that the American nation is united—more firmly and more consciously than any other—by a common belief. It can be briefly stated: Equality under the law and under God. Equal opportunity for all. Free, restless activity of each for the improvement of his own condition, and a belief that his own interest will spontaneously harmonize with the interests of others for the common good. As little government as possible. As little foreign policy as possible. A refusal to admit the existence of conditions and problems not susceptible of being solved through good will and reason. Such was Jefferson's belief in the 18th century and Herbert Hoover's in the early 20th.

American politics was made on the basis of this common credo, seldom against it. The spokesmen of the minorities, the populists, the progressives, the belligerent publicists and "muckrakers," shared it with their enemies, the presidents of the great corporations and the official dignitaries of the state. The principle itself was never at stake. The question was: who stood for it consistently and concretely, and who merely proclaimed it rhetorically while betraying it in fact? There was nothing similar here to the battle between two irreconcilable ideologies which has kept France divided ever since 1792. The ideas of the American Revolution ruled the New World without challenge.

The age-old discussion concerning the sources of the American credo can never produce any simple answer. The notion of democratic equality has one of its roots in the Judeo-Christian tradition, while the Declaration of Independence resounds with the fashionable secular vocabulary of the Enlightenment. In any case, however, liberalism and democracy in America were bound to develop into something different, and consciously different, from what they were in a Europe blessed and cursed by having a history.

Two of the profoundest thinkers of Europe, Tocqueville and Acton, have held that freedom cannot last without some form of aristocracy. Though in America, too, such thoughts were cautiously brought forward by conservative thinkers at the time when the Republic was born, they did not survive their initial exposure to the new atmosphere, and the community moved to the business of the day without paying much attention to them. A continent had to be conquered, explored, built up to provide work for all and an equal chance of happiness for all. Americans were conservative only in that they held on to certain basic democratic principles, regarded them as established in this land for all time; everything else was expected to change, improve, expand indefinitely.

THERE are two classical prophecies concerning the relations between the Old and the New World: according to one, Europeans would sooner or later follow the American example and establish a European federal republic; according to the other, America was in danger, through overpopulation, industrialization, and class conflicts, of coming to share all the miseries of the Old World—the Old and the New could not meet without disaster. Franklin and Washington gave the classic formulation to the first, Jefferson to the second; and it is the Jeffersonian view that has, in the main, dominated American thought.

Jefferson clearly reveals the parochial aspect of the American belief in progress: he had a cold contempt for the past—that is, the European past—and for European society in its two extremes: court and nobility on the one side, metropolitan mob on the other. Later, when American industry emulated

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and surpassed the British, Jefferson's anti-urbanism could not be seriously insisted upon. But the antithesis, America vs. Europe, persisted. For the industrialization of America did not bring with it, as in Europe, the theory and practice of the class struggle. The two extremes which Jefferson so disliked took the form of European conservatism and European revolution; both were equally distasteful to the Americans. According to the American view, Europe was free at any moment to Americanize herself, to get rid of her narrow borders and continual wars, her standing armies, her kings and class differences. But perhaps things were too old and hopelessly corrupt over there, beyond any possible improvement, and perhaps the golden mean of well-regulated freedom and peaceful progress was reserved for a happier and younger hemisphere.

Thus developed what among historians came to be called "American exceptionalism." In the diplomatic sphere the Monroe Doctrine became its classical expression. America was better; America was in any case different; that laws of history of the Old World did not apply here. Exceptionalists have often been among the most ardent democrats, glorying in progress and fighting for the rights of man; they have been philosophers like John Dewey, historians like Charles Beard, politicians like George W. Norris and the older La Follette. Yet it was from the last named that the European policy of President Wilson met the most dangerous, because intellectually the most significant, opposition. With imperialists of the type of Lodge the president might have been able to come to terms; with the progressives, the exclusively American progressives, there was no possible understanding. The belief in American exceptionalism could, and often did, degenerate into isolationism.

CHARLES Beard's American history expresses even in its title the spirit of the undertaking: *The Rise of American Civilization*—as something different from and independent of European civilization. It is not strange, then, that the term "Atlantic Community" was first coined by the aristocratic and pessimistic Henry Adams, whereas the very American and democratic Beard refused to see the need for such a community and spoke of the bloody follies of the Old World with pity and contempt. When the United States was finally drawn into the maelstrom of the Second World War, America's most representative historian discovered no other cause for the disaster but the treacherous action of a few men in high office. Admirers of Charles Beard did not understand this: how could the author of *The Rise of American Civilization* descend to the well-documented platitudes of *President Roosevelt and the Coming of the War*? But the spirit of both works is consistent. America, Charles Beard believed, was isolated, free, master of her fate. To Americans, as a nation, nothing could happen that they did not want; and war they certainly did not wish for. So how could a catastrophe of Old World destructiveness and stupidity befall the United States without treachery in high office?

Similarly, though on a different intellectual level, I have found that American college students have little sense for the tragic in history, for vital conflicts in which both sides are "right" so that a solution through violence becomes inevitable. That there may be such conflicts the American War between the States ought to be enough to show; but since it was an altogether successful operation, ending in the complete victory of one side and followed by an unprecedented industrial expansion, the defeated, in retrospect, inevitably appeared to have been in the wrong. Even Woodrow Wilson, the moralist historian, was not free from this abasement before the march of history when he announced that the South was right legally but wrong historically. German historians have, in other circumstances, said as much.

There has been in America, as in Germany, a certain readiness to identify success and right. Since Americans sincerely believed themselves to represent the best, most

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rightful of institutions, and since they had never really lost a war, it would have been superhuman for them to have escaped the optimistic fallacy. The best, most hard-working man in the country was successful, and so were all good men; likewise successful was the best, most hard-working country. If somehow, somewhere, violent conflicts developed, one side at least must be completely in the wrong; the task was to eliminate it, so that the conditions of free, peaceful competition and progress could be quickly restored. In this way both world wars were interpreted; and now American public opinion is once again concentrating upon one single extraordinarily evil power that alone impedes the spread of peace and progress.

But, despite surface similarities, nothing has been farther from the American historical mind than power-worship of the nationalist, Hegelian, or Marxian type. For Americans, the good cause always won. But it was not good because it won, as German historians believed; *it won because it was good.* "Power politics," to Americans, was the mark of Cain borne by the Old World. But that the great republic existed, that the great republic always grew, always succeeded—this seemed a manifestation of the divine plan. If Europe was continually in the throes of failure, that was a divine chastisement for the error of its ways.

That Charles Beard was representative of the American ethos and Henry Adams an unhappy outsider—this much, at least, every American critic would admit. Adams himself considered himself an outsider. In Europe he would not have had to. In the intellectual world of Taine, of Burckhardt, of Nietzsche, it was an accepted attitude to distrust one's own age and its creations. Adams, the American, did not dare to systematize his thoughts and forebodings. His keenest prophecies, intutions of an agonized historical sensitivity, are found in his letters, not in his books. If Henry Adams paralleled Burckhardt, his brother Brooks Adams anticipated Spengler, but without Spengler's shrill success. From a publisher's standpoint, *The Law of Civilization and Decay* was written half a century too early. It is the type of book which would have created a sensation in Europe after the First World War—and in the United States in 1950.

For today it is different. Today it is felt that the Jeffersonian version of the American creed stands in need of revision; that it rested on transitory conditions; that a philosophy which served a broad continent so well for so long a time is too simple for the wide, confused world it is now called upon to understand and to inspire.

At an American college, the graduating class was recently asked to put down its thoughts of the idea of progress. The students were men between twenty and thirty, mainly from well-to-do families, and from the state of California. Enormous in its inner growth, dominated by the automobile and by progressive education, California is one of the most optimistic, least historically-minded of states. But these privileged young people were not so certain of their present and future good fortune. The great majority denied the truth of the idea of progress, regretfully rather than cynically. In their papers one could find all those arguments which have long since been familiar to European pessimism, but which one could hardly have expected at this place, from this source. The United States, they wrote, was particularly privileged, but the difference between America and the rest of the world had already lost much of its significance and was bound to lose more in the future. Technical progress was not necessarily progress toward the good. Greater power was not greater freedom. We Americans, they wrote, are today incomparably more powerful in the world than fifty years ago, but we have not therefore become more free in the fashioning of our own life; rather the contrary. One student actually held that men have never been as unhappy as they are today. Others tried to distinguish, to introduce nuances; they tried, in their modest way, to propose those revisions of the ancient creed without which it cannot stand the onslaught of our times.

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THIS much is plainly true: unrevised, the Jeffersonian American credo is not adequate to interpret the experiences of the 20th century. Consequently, those who adhere to it unperturbed are not really talking to the point. Two examples may stand for the credo in its unrevised form: the, so to speak, official philosophy of the National Association of Manufacturers, and the opinions of the circle around Mr. Henry Wallace.

When one listens to the speeches offered at a regional meeting of the NAM one has the feeling of wearing Hans Christian Andersen's magic galoshes and of being carried back into the mid-Victorian period. These are not Machiavellian strategists of the class struggle, as some of their European colleagues undeniably were and are, but Christian gentlemen, community leaders who give a considerable part of their income to charitable enterprises and show a praiseworthy interest in the welfare of their employes. But they have drawn no conclusions from the economic experiences of the last decades. The great depression will not be mentioned. The federal government appears as a hostile intruder into realms that are none of its business, an obnoxious initiator of outlandish aberrations; the less it makes itself noticeable the better it will be. If only the individual can work unimpeded by the state, if he will exert himself and save, he can and will succeed; and his success will not only be in his own interest, but will serve the interest of the community as well. This and this alone is the American way. For what is socialism if not the newest form of totalitarian tyranny which, as priest-domination, as feudalism, absolute monarchy, or revolutionary dictatorship, has plagued Europe and Asia since the origin of time?

Henry Wallace, on the other hand, keeps stressing the duty of the state to act as guardian over the economic life of the nation. In America this is often regarded as socialism, although Wallace has repeatedly insisted that he wants merely to protect the independent farmer and the small business man against the giant corporations. Actually his whole economic philosophy is nearer to the populist traditions of America than to the socialist traditions of Europe. Even more unmistakably American is Wallace's belief in the good genius of the man in the street, his cult of the "common man." Woodrow Wilson blamed a few evil autocrats for the catastrophe of 1914, but was optimistic about the outcome: a world war would make the world safe for democracy. Wallace was equally optimistic about the outcome of the Second World War, and later he blamed a few particularly wicked business men in Wall Street for the new world tensions. With solemnity he informed us that the 20th century would be the century of the common man—without trying for a moment to define his hero more closely. He did not stop to consider that a "common man" might sometimes look like a midwestern churchgoer on Sunday, but that he might also have the ugly face which, say, the masses of the city of Vienna showed that day in 1938 when Hitler came to redeem them.

THIS can only mean that certain lessons of recent history have not been learned in America—economic lessons, political, moral, human lessons. An ancient credo is proclaimed in its entirety as if nothing had happened but a few accidents, unpleasant, to be sure, but easily to be eliminated.

There is, however, another side to the picture. There is the real danger that a belief which is recognized as inadequate in some respects may be abandoned altogether, to be replaced by some modish fatalism or nihilism. An all too eager curiosity, an excitability of the mind, makes us ready to cast all traditions to the winds and buy up the inventions offered by an intellectual quack. The sensational success of a book like James Burnham's *Managerial Revolution*—a devil's brew hastily concocted from Machiavelli, Marx, Spengler—is an example of this intellectual susceptibility. So was, not long ago, the popularity of the pseudoscience of geopolitics. Power, in its most direct form of power to kill, as the ultimate if not the total rationale of politics, plays today a far greater part in the mind of the

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average American than the gloomiest prophets would have thought possible fifty years ago.

This is the danger of disappointed optimism, of suddenly lost illusions. It is in the United States, not in France or Italy, not even in Germany, that one can sometimes hear statements to the effect that "our civilization is finished" and that it would be best "to blow the whole thing up." And it is in the United States that *Realpolitik* is most remarkably in vogue.

But it seems to me that the American tradition, redefined in terms of recent experiences, is vital enough to withstand the onslaught of international nihilism. We have not yet plumbed the deep of the American spirit.

THE Jeffersonian variant of American exceptionalism now belongs clearly to the past, and it seems, therefore, that even in the past it was not so complete as it seemed to earlier generations. The essays of the elder Arthur Schlesinger, for instance, which recently have been published under the title *New Paths to the Present*, consider mainly those trends which America shared with Europe through the greater part of the 19th century: industrialism, urbanism, nationalism, democracy, humanitarianism, and so on.

But there is, as we have mentioned, another aspect of American exceptionalism: what may be called the "universalist" concept of American exceptionalism, as expounded by Franklin and Washington, and according to which America was to be a guide and beacon to the Old World, pointing the way to the commonwealth of humanity. There is, moreover, an inner relation between this other, universalist kind of exceptionalism and the crisis of the 20th century. For the American republic was founded in the very spirit that first proclaimed the unique character of the modern historical situation of man. It was the revolutionary spirit of the last decades of the 18th century, the spirit of the Year One. The new republic was to set the example of the definitely right and true, worthy of imitation by all; such, for instance, was Immanuel Kant's understanding. But this universalist exceptionalism had to do *with the whole world of man,* not with the privileged position *of one particular region.* This universal, global view has often been obscured in the course of the 19th century, but note how it has reappeared time and again at moments of crisis: under Lincoln, under Wilson, under Franklin Roosevelt. It is the type of exceptionalism which is adequate to the tasks of our age.

Thus, it is not by accident that the idea of world government or world federation, that most characteristic idea of the 18th century, is today nowhere so popular as in the United States. Nor do the American protagonists of world federalism fail to stress the parallel between the American emergency of 1787 and the world emergency of 1950.

They may even stress it too much. The tasks which the founding fathers had to master at Philadelphia were delicate enough, but they were child's play compared with the obstacles standing between our present follies and genuine world union. Still, the historical legitimacy is there, the world federalists are continuing the best American tradition, while endowing it with a new significance. Earlier, Woodrow Wilson described his League of Nations as an adaptation "of the doctrine of President Monroe as the doctrine of the world"—a weird, paradoxical definition, but not at all devoid of historical meaning.

No unwarranted optimism should inspire the propaganda efforts of the world federalists. The more serious among them do not follow the American Candide to whom everything is still for the best in the best of all possible hemispheres. Kant, their true master, at the same time that he was very near to the intellectual origins of the American republic, also knew much about the self-destroying possibilities of man. He condemned pessimism not because experience would not justify it—there was enough to justify it even in Kant's time—but because

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to him pessimism was an unpractical and, therefore, an immoral attitude.

There are some traditionalists, such as Walter Lippmann, who want us to go back to Metternich rather than to Kant. They believe in the vitality of notions like "neutrality," "buffer-state," "balance of power." Their books and newspaper columns are pleasant reading; but their charm is the delusive charm of escapism—like the escape into medieval towns, romantic tales, landscapes where we used to be at home but are no more. The recognition of the exceptional character of the present world situation is far more painful. It may lead to councils of despair, the idea of preventive war, or world empire. It may also lead to wiser recommendations, in the light of a great tradition.

It is in part a matter of chance and taste, in what personality or what document we choose to see a living tradition at its best. *Fighting Liberal,* the memoirs of Senator George Norris, is a beautiful book, but too exclusively American; it is not subtle enough for this world in this decade. Lincoln Steffens' autobiography is rich, shrewd, and generous, but sometimes shallow in its optimism, conceited, and unreliable in its moral judgments. Steffens was a magnificent mediator between the continents of the "Atlantic Community." But he believed in Lenin, even in Mussolini; he is dead today. Henry L. Stimson, although only one year younger than Steffens, is far more alive. If I had to recommend to Europeans one single work as the truest and happiest expression of living "Americanism" in a changed world, I would not hesitate: I would choose Stimson's *On Active Service in Peace and War.*

Stimson's political memoirs have been evaluated in this country chiefly as a contribution to the history of diplomacy in the 1930's and of the Second World War. They are that, and more. They contain a complete political philosophy—the "credo of a progressive conservative," in the light of which the whole debate over free enterprise versus the welfare state appears abstract and irrelevant, and which makes the phrase "conservative American" mean something so different from "conservative European." They are also a history of the 20th century, from McKinley to Truman, from the innocence of 19th-century isolationism to the One World of 1947. Stimson, the Republican, the New England patrician, the American mountaineer and explorer, early saw the flowing together of the streams of American and European history and strove hard to make his compatriots see it as well. To him, August 1914 marked the end of an era not only in European but in human affairs; after that time, his public activity was almost entirely devoted to issues arising from the fact that the United States cannot remain alone in the world. He tells his story with the utmost candor. He embellishes nothing; not the failure of his own principle, the "Stimson Doctrine," which merely refused to recognize the fruits of lawless conquest; not the shame and misery of international politics of the 1930's; not the horrors of war, including the atom bomb for the use of which he shared responsibility; not the grievous oddities of the Eastern ally. But this earnest and experienced statesman does not despair in the evening of his life. Practical and without illusions, he understood his age and all that was new in it, without abandoning the values that are rooted in an Americanism that is universal rather than parochial. These are his concluding words:

"Those who read this book will mostly be younger than I, men of the generations who must bear the active part in the work ahead. Let them learn from our adventures what they can. Let them charge us with our failures and do better in their turn. But let them not turn aside from what they have to do, nor think that criticism excuses inaction. Let them have hope, and virtue, and let them believe in mankind and its future, for there is good as well as evil, and the man who tries to work for the good, believing in its eventual victory, while he may suffer setback and even disaster, will never know defeat. The only deadly sin I know is cynicism."

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IS EGYPT PLANNING A SECOND ROUND?

A Key Sector of the Arab-Israel Cold War

BRIAN FAULKNER

FIFTEEN months have now gone by since Egypt—the first of the Arab League countries to negotiate with the new Jewish state—signed an armistice with Israel at Rhodes. The agreement defined a temporary frontier between the two states, and established a no-man's-land between their armies. More important, it broke the semblance of Arab unity which had marked the invasion of Palestine on May 15, 1948. It appeared reasonable to hope that, given time and opportunity, Egypt would continue to move gradually towards normal relations with her new neighbor. Instead, however, Egypt is in the forefront of the fresh diplomatic offensive which the Arab states are waging against Israel, and, at this writing, her fighting forces are being rearmed on a hitherto unprecedented scale.

Does this portend a fresh attack on Israel by Egypt which would, willy-nilly, involve the other Arab states? Or is Egypt merely going through the motions of rearming to satisfy her wounded pride and to regain lost prestige and influence in the Arab world?

AT THIS juncture, and in spite of the present Egyptian attitude towards Israel, the factors which make for a peaceful settlement would seem to outweigh by far, on a short-term basis, those which point to a new outbreak of fighting. These peace factors may be listed briefly as follows:

1. Anglo-American policy requires stability in an area that has important naval, military, and air bases on Russia's Southern flank.* British and American diplomacy in Cairo is directed, therefore, to slowly reducing Egyptian hostility towards Israel and to ensuring that, in any event, it must not be allowed to become anything other than a "paper war."

2. Since the Arab defeats in Palestine, Egypt sets no great store by the Arab League. Her statesmen still pay lip service to it, but they regard themselves as having been deserted by their Arab allies in the recent war.

3. Egypt made no important territorial gains in Palestine, and, therefore, is not subject to the charge by the other Arab states that in negotiating with Israel, it seeks peace for purely selfish reasons—as would, for instance, be the case with Jordan.

4. In Cairo itself, the balance of political power has passed recently from the hands of King Farouk and the palace clique—who were primarily responsible for Egypt's intervention in Palestine—to the Wafd,† which was in opposition at the time of the war, is opposed to many of the policies stemming

EGYPT is rearming rapidly. The government in Cairo has earmarked one hundred and forty million dollars—one third of its total budgetary expenditure—for the Egyptian fighting forces this year. Does this portend war against Israel again, or is Egypt merely seeking to satisfy her pride as the leading Arab nation, a pride which was deeply wounded by the 1948 defeats in Palestine? In this article BRIAN FAULKNER discusses the psychological factors that affect the issue in Cairo, and also outlines Egypt's grave social and political problems. Brian Faulkner is the pen name of a British writer who has a long association with the Middle East, its peoples, and its leaders. This is his first article for COMMENTARY.

*Apparently to safeguard British interests in the Suez Canal Zone, the Duke of Gloucester on instructions from England's King George recently conferred upon King Farouk the rank of major general in the British Army. The New York *Times* report from Cairo suggested that "King Farouk's acceptance of the honorary appointment is strong evidence that Egypt is seeking a constructive solution . . . that would end infringement of her sovereignty but would not result in an anti-British attitude. . . ."

†Wafd means "delegation" in Arabic. The party takes its name from the first Egyptian delegation which visited Britain in 1919 to seek independence.

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from the palace, and is, moreover, mainly concerned about Egypt's relations with Britain.

5. Relations with Britain, not with Israel, are the main issue in Cairo today. Negotiations for a new treaty with Britain, together with Egypt's claims on the Sudan, provide a wide outlet for the sense of frustration engendered in Cairo by the Palestine defeats, and for the excessive nationalism which characterizes Egypt's foreign policies. They will probably occupy public attention to the exclusion of all other issues for some months.

AGAINST these factors, however, must be set others—psychological, political, and economic—which indicate clearly that, in the long run, Egypt will not easily be reconciled to the presence of Israel on its Eastern frontier. There is ample evidence in Cairo to show that, whatever immediate policy Egypt's rulers eventually may adopt, they view the establishment and growth of the new Jewish state as a direct threat to their social order, their economy, and their predominant role in the Middle East.

As a nation, the Egyptians are in the throes of an acute inferiority complex. A subject people for many centuries, they have at last thrown off the foreign yoke, and they are out to prove to the world—but most of all to themselves—that they can stand firmly on their own feet. Yet in their first major attempt at independent action, they were roundly defeated by a handful of people with no military tradition, who were poorly armed, and who, as Jews, would never have been permitted to serve in the Egyptian Army.

This was, more than anything else, a humiliating blow to Egyptian pride. Partial relief was provided by the rebuff which Egypt was able to administer to Britain in rejecting the latter's offer of assistance when the Israelis had turned the tables on the Egyptian Army and had invaded Sinai. After publicly snubbing Britain, the Egyptians found it easier to agree to an armistice with Israel. But the force of the blow is still felt.

By no one is it more keenly felt than by King Farouk who, it should be stressed, is no mere figurehead of a monarch but the most important and the most self-willed political personage in Egypt. War on Israel provided a long-sought outlet for his ambitions, which petty cabinet-making in Cairo no longer satisfied. He identified himself closely with the Egyptian Army's advance on Gaza. The Egyptian public was reminded that their King came of a long line of soldiers, one of whom, Ibrahin Pasha, took Palestine from the Turks and shook the Ottoman Empire to its foundations in the early 19th century. Shortly before the final Israeli assault on the Egyptians in December 1948, Farouk visited the front, dined with his generals, and presented each of his officers with an inscribed copy of the Koran. His prestige has not yet recovered from the defeat which followed.

Politically, Farouk had another bitter pill to swallow when King Abdullah of Jordan emerged as the victor on the Arab side. This not only exacerbated an old rivalry, in which Egypt is aligned with Saudi Arabia against the latter's traditional foes, the Hashemite rulers of Jordan and Iraq; it also upset the balance of power among the Arab states and threatened Egypt's position as the leading Arab nation.

THUS, while nursing her wounded pride, Egypt now has a double objective in view: to block any further extension of Abdullah's realm, and to restore her own power and prestige among the Arab nations.

By intrigues in Damascus and support for the anti-Abdullah factions there, Egyptian diplomacy has contrived so far to thwart Abdullah's plans for annexing Syria. It has not yet achieved its second objective. Both, however, could be attained by a successful war on Israel.

Egypt is encouraged to think of this "solution" by: (a) Israel's economic plight, which is growing steadily worse and which Egypt believes must be reflected in the state of the Israeli armed forces; (b) her own ample resources and wealth of manpower, which are such that the Palestine campaigns of 1948 were hardly felt by the public at large (the Arab refugees were simply kept out); (c) by her growing armed strength and the acquisi-

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tion of new weapons such as submarines, with which she believes it will be easy to blockade Haifa and Tel Aviv; and (d) by what Egypt believes to be a growing lack of interest and concern in Middle Eastern affairs on the part of the American public.

Economically, Egypt views Israel as a potential menace to the major role which Egyptian business and finance would like to play in the Middle East. It is true that, given normal conditions, Israel would probably become a valuable customer for Egypt's surplus foodstuffs and raw materials. But Israel would want to pay for these with the products of her new light industries—and Egypt is currently engaged in expanding her own industrial production of consumer's goods. Her natural wealth and resources far exceed those of Israel, but the Egyptians are acutely aware that Israel already has more skilled labor and craftsmen than any Arab country; and that, given time, Israel will outstrip them all, as a Westernized, purposeful, energetic nation must surely outstrip a people most of whom live encrusted in medieval sloth, squalor, and corruption.

Here we reach the fundamental reason for the mistrust and enmity felt for Israel by the rulers of Egypt and the rest of the Arab countries, with the possible exception of Lebanon. It has little to do with religious animosity, the Arab refugees from Palestine, the possession of Holy Places or oilfields, or the policies of the Great Powers. It is simply a deep-rooted fear of the impact which a highly progressive state, organized on Western lines, must have on neighboring countries whose way of life has not changed, basically, for two thousand years or more.

INDEED, so far as eighty per cent of Egypt's inhabitants are concerned, this way of life has not changed for four thousand years in this most modern and advanced of the Arab states. The Egyptian peasant, or *fellah*, continues to draw his water and till his land with the same instruments depicted in the rock drawings that embellish the tombs of the Pharaohs. He may ride to market in a bus or a train instead of on an ass—but he is still disease-ridden; he still shares a mud hut with his cow and his poultry; he still lives off a handful of beans and rice; he is still illiterate; and he is still virtually the slave of a pasha who lives in a remote city and for whom he must toil from sunrise to sunset.

If he is a factory worker he dwells in a slum which, for depravity, has few parallels elsewhere. No trade union protects him. He earns a pittance, and until recently was glad to get it, for he knew no better. The occasional strikes are quelled with firearms.

The pasha has no wish to change all this, nor is he eager to welcome as his next door neighbor the modern factory workers and farmers of Israel, with their trade unions, social insurance, minimum wage scales, regular hours of work and days of rest, decent housing and clothing—and their politically conscious organizations.

This last, the political consciousness manifest in Israel, is what the rulers of Egypt fear most. It is still at a low ebb in Egypt itself, and what there is of it is carefully channeled into extreme nationalism. If the Egyptians do not have a better standard of living, they are told—when such matters are discussed in public (which is rare)—that it is entirely the fault of the foreign oppressor, who must at all costs be driven from Egyptian soil. Thus for the past thirty years Egypt's political parties have directed their main efforts to getting rid of the British and, progressively, to whittling down the influence of the prosperous non-Egyptian trading communities which grew up in the lee of British-imposed law and order. Scant attention has been paid to social problems. The main thing was, and is, to get the foreigners out.

IN ACTING thus, educated Egyptians were impelled by the current of ideas which spread with the end of World War I and found concrete expression in Wilson's Fourteen Points. Their political leaders became —*and have remained*—not royalists or republicans, conservatives, liberals, or socialists, but simply nationalists. The danger inherent in the political life of backward countries flowing into such a mold is that

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little thought and no preparation are given to what is to happen after the occupying power has gone. In the Middle East, it is best exemplified in Syria, whose leaders, when the French were forced out five years ago, naturally became the men who had agitated most against French rule. Since then, they have revealed themselves to be morally incapable of government, with thought only for their personal gain, prestige, and power. Three coups d'état in a row by rival Syrian Army cliques are the result.

Egypt has not yet reached that stage, though the nationalist game is wearing perilously thin. The British abandoned Cairo and Alexandria three years ago and withdrew to the Suez Canal Zone, most of which is desert. The Egyptians thereupon turned on the foreign and non-Moslem communities in their midst, Greek, Italian, Jewish, and Armenian. Many of these people emigrated elsewhere, others merged their interests with Egyptian Moslems or became Egyptian nationals themselves. As these problems were solved, however, the nationalist leaders found fresh cud to chew. Currently it is the Sudan, which the Egyptians would like to take away from the British.

That Egypt has some legal rights to at least a share in the administration of this vast African territory cannot be denied. But that there are far more pressing problems to be dealt with fifteen miles south of Cairo instead of fifteen hundred miles away in Khartoum is equally true. One is forced to the conclusion that Egypt's present-day rulers would still rather devote their energies and talents to vain, profitless argumentation over such questions of national prestige than to tackling the really urgent business of raising the standard of living of the fellah and of the constantly growing number of industrial workers in the Nile Delta cities.

Already the latter form a fertile breeding ground for Communism, which is outlawed in Egypt. There is a very real danger of its spreading, however rigorous the police measures taken to suppress it, as the fellah becomes more aware of his suffering and the possibilities of radical improvement. Yet no responsible Egyptian will publicly face the issue. The fellah has no means of improving his lot by pressure through normal constitutional channels. His government has all the trappings of parliamentary democracy—a model constitution, a senate and a house of representatives (called Chamber of Deputies), a supreme court and codes of law drawn from French legislation—but it lacks the mainspring. The power to activate these organs of government seldom comes from the people, though there is universal suffrage for all males over twenty-one years of age. Seventy-five out of every hundred Egyptian voters can neither read nor write and, if they vote at all, are as often as not coerced into doing so. For the remainder, personalities alone count, since there are no basic differences in the policies of the parties contesting an election.

THERE is one major exception to the above in the shape of the Wafd, which bore the brunt of the struggle against Britain in the early days of Egyptian nationalism. It has grown roots in the country as no other party has done. These sprang originally from the personality of Saad Zaghloul Pasha, its first leader and a great orator whom the British rated dangerous enough to deport from Egypt. Zaghloul died in 1926 and his mantle fell on men of lesser stature. But unlike other Egyptian parties, which die when their leaders pass away, the Wafd has survived. Zaghloul's memory still lives, and the party is popular with a large mass of the electorate. It does not have to carry its supporters to the polls in police trucks after beating them up, nor need it resort to publishing fake results, as is commonly done by its rival parties. It draws its strength from land-owning families and their villages which have voted Wafdist ever since they first had a vote, and also from a section of the new professional class—lawyers, doctors, engineers, and so forth—for whom its independent attitude towards the Palace has a strong appeal.

The Wafd's only serious rival to power is the King. Farouk, now thirty years of age,

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inherited a strong prejudice against the leading party of his country from his father Fouad, who regarded the popular support it enjoyed in his day as a threat to his own position. In addition, a deep personal feud divides Farouk and Moustapha el Nahas Pasha, the present Wafdist leader, whom the king was compelled by the British, under threat of forced abdication, to accept as Prime Minister when the Axis forces menaced Egypt in 1941.

Under the constitution, Farouk is entitled to dissolve parliament when he sees fit and to appoint a government of his own choosing pending the outcome of new elections. Since coming to the throne twelve years ago, Farouk has twice availed himself of this privilege to dismiss the Wafd, replacing it each time by politicians who, to borrow a phrase current on such occasions in the government-controlled Egyptian newspaper, "enjoy the confidence of the king." A docile majority in parliament was obtained by combined palace and government pressure on the electorate or, where that failed, by faking the election returns. Egypt could thus appear in the eyes of the world as a parliamentary democracy, while in fact the country was ruled by a dictatorship of the palace, backed by royal patronage for its supporters, censorship of the press, a strong police force, and political exile for its opponents.

EGYPT emerged from just such a period of government in January of this year when the Wafd—which had been kept out of power for five years—won the election by a very large majority. The king's advisers were prompted to surrender the reins of power by Farouk's growing unpopularity with the small but increasingly influential middle class and with the army, which on its return from Palestine expressed avowedly Wafdist sympathies. (The Sudanese officer who commanded the Egyptians at Falujja and who was feted on his return to Cairo as the hero of the war was suspected of plotting to overthrow Farouk, and was removed summarily from Cairo to an obscure post in a remote province.)

At the same time, when revision of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty was substituted for a war on Israel as a nationalist issue, the British made it clear that they would not negotiate with a government that had no public support. This latter factor moved Farouk to give way to the Wafd, though the Wafd believes—and most political observers in Cairo agree with it—that once the treaty issue is settled, the king will dismiss the party from office with little loss of time.

If the Wafd is the party of the common man in Egypt, it cannot be said that it makes use of this prerogative beyond claiming his support at the polls. Once in power, the Wafdist leaders display in the main the same corruption, nepotism, vanity, and personal greed that characterizes most Egyptian politicians. This is almost axiomatic in a country where public spirit, as it is known in the United States or Britain, is virtually divorced from public life except on the strictly limited level of nationalism. Power is an opportunity to enrich oneself, one's family, and one's friends, to acquire more land, more wealth, and a new house at the expense of the public purse—and to drive out the foreigner. The public welfare, unless it offers particularly lucrative possibilities, is left to the permanent civil service which, because it is underpaid, is as corrupt as the men at the top.

There are exceptions to the rule, needless to say. Mahmoud Fahmy el Nokrashy Pasha, who was murdered when Prime Minister two years ago, was an honest administrator and died a poor man. Dr. Taha Hussein, the present Wafdist Minister of Education, is a poet, writer, and scholar of repute, one of the leading literary figures of contemporary Egypt. But such men are rarely found in Egyptian political life.

WHATEVER the failings of the Wafd, it is nevertheless a step nearer democracy than Farouk's conceptions of rule. The king is surrounded at court by flatterers intent on pandering to the monarch's likes and dislikes. His minor whims become affairs of state and must be satisfied regardless of consequences. In the early days of his reign he had hopes

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of reviving the Caliphate (which died out when the last Sultan of Turkey was deposed in 1923) and his supporters were ordered to acclaim him in public as "leader of the faithful." The plan, inspired solely by the king's ambitions and illusions of grandeur, met with no response in the Arab countries and was dropped just as suddenly as it had been contrived, though Farouk still is photographed every Friday attending midday prayers in one of the many mosques of Cairo or Alexandria. The public at large knows little or nothing of his private life, which is not exactly exemplary. A slavish press depicts him as a model king, a father of his people, the protector of the fellah and the workman, the patron of art and learning—yet he never stirs from his palace without a bodyguard.

In politics, Farouk's chief concern is with personalities rather than issues. His quarrel with Lord Killearn, Britain's wartime ambassador in Cairo, embittered Anglo-Egyptian relations for years. When the Arab League was formed, Farouk chose personally to align himself with King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia against the Hashemite princes who rule Iraq and Jordan, though there was nothing at the time to prevent Egypt from making common cause with all three countries, with which she then had only formal relations and no blood ties. This would have served the Arab cause better than Farouk's ambition to make Egypt the dominating power in the League, a fact which the other rulers resented, and which crippled the League almost before it was weaned.

In home affairs, Farouk fares little better. His quarrel with Nahas Pasha has vitiated normal political life for ten years. To keep the Wafdist leader out of office the King has had recourse to a series of "yes men" as prime ministers, only one of whom rose above the level of a puppet. This was Nokrashy Pasha, who led a splinter group of the Wafd, and who accepted power from the king while determined to steer a middle course. He was more concerned with home affairs than with the Arab League and, although not opposed in principle to a war on Israel, was against an early invasion of Palestine on the grounds that Egypt was ill-prepared. He was overruled by Farouk, who had no wish to see his rivals in Jordan and Iraq enlarge (as he thought) their territories while Egypt remained idle. Since Nokrashy Pasha derived his power entirely from the king, and had no genuine party following, he gave way and carried out the king's wishes.

NOKRASHY PASHA was responsible for the repressive acts taken against Egyptian Jews at the time of the Palestine invasion. They constitute a large community, composed mainly of Sephardic Jews, whose emancipation and prosperity date back about a hundred years, when the influence of European liberalism first began to make itself felt in Cairo and French missionaries established schools there. The Mosseri and Cattawi families, who still bulk large in the Egyptian business world, were bankers to Farouk's father and grandfather. With the investment of British, French, and Belgian capital at the turn of the century, and the subsequent development of Egypt's cotton plantations, Cairo and Alexandria grew into modern cities. The greater part of Egyptian Jewry was concentrated there, and its members rapidly came to the fore as merchants and traders, fulfilling the role of middlemen between the foreign investors and the moneyed Egyptian Moslems, who were landowners with no knowledge of modern commerce. They adopted European dress and a Westernized mode of living. When the European powers compelled Egypt to establish special courts, composed of European judges, to ensure fair treatment for their investors and traders, many of the Jews acquired a foreign nationality in order to benefit from the protection of the new laws.

The Egyptian Jews, then, have lived in the main as a foreign community for many years, much as the Greeks and Italians, who crossed the Mediterranean in thousands to share in the new prosperity of the lower Nile valley. Their language and culture are French, not Arabic. They read French newspapers published in Cairo and Alexandria by Jews, their children attend French schools

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and are sent to universities in France. They do not wear the scarlet fez or tarboush, which is the headgear of the urban Egyptian. They take no part in the political life of the country. Only a very small number of them are in government service, and none in high posts. They have always been allowed to worship freely and, since so many of them are engaged in commerce, Jewish religious holidays are observed by the banks and stock exchanges on a par with Christian and Moslem holidays.

Under the watchful eye of the British occupation forces, which up to 1947 had garrisoned Cairo and Alexandria for close on fifty years, the Egyptians maintained an unblemished record of tolerance for the foreigners in their midst. Then their own middle class began to grow. The British yielded gradually to the pressure of nationalism. Extra-territorial rights for foreigners were abolished in 1936. Egyptian Moslems began to demand a greater share in the finance and commerce of their country, which hitherto had been concentrated almost exclusively in foreign hands. The Jews naturally were among the first to feel the effect of this trend, which since the end of World War II and the British evacuation of the Nile Delta has become a definite, purposeful policy on the part of the Egyptian government. As a result, some Jews have reverted to Egyptian nationality (though not without difficulty), others have taken Moslem partners into their businesses and, at the government's request, Moslem employees. The reverse however is seldom the case. Moslem firms will not hire Jews or any foreigners, even in a technical capacity, unless they have no alternative. They are reluctant even to employ Copts (Egyptian Christians, of whom there are about a million) although the Copt is generally rated as a more industrious and skilled workman or clerk than the Moslem.

THUS, even before the Arab invasion of Palestine, the Jews of Egypt, who have lived there for over two thousand years (Alexandria had a flourishing Jewish community in 300 BCE), found their future endangered by nationalism. Zionism itself was not a serious source of trouble, since it was not popular among Egypt's Jews. When, on invading Palestine, the Egyptians took action against those they suspected of Zionist sympathies, fewer than two thousand Jews were interned, out of a community numbering some eighty thousand souls.

There were, besides, several days of mob rule in the streets of Cairo which the police did little to put down and during which no Westerner, Jew or Gentile, was safe. A number of Jewish business houses and shops whose owners were suspected of connections with Israel were placed under government control, in the same way as Axis property was taken over in the United States during the war. This undoubtedly led to abuses on the part of individual Egyptian officials, but the greater part of the property has now been restored.

All in all, it must be said, repressions during the period were less severe than those suffered in some other Arab countries. At this writing, some twenty thousand Jews have quit Egypt since 1948. A few have found their way to Israel, most have emigrated to France, Italy, South America, or elsewhere. In the main, they are young people who have little future in Egypt while the current phase of nationalism lasts—as it seems bound to do for many years to come. Those who remain have their roots in the country, and would be reluctant to leave unless faced with dire circumstances. They still play an important role in business and finance, and in the rapidly expanding field of Egyptian industry. Many of them are more prosperous than ever.

Egypt professes to distinguish between Jew and Zionist, Jew and Israeli. Nevertheless, in the event of further hostilities in Palestine involving Egypt—which, in the opinion of this writer, are bound to occur sooner or later—the situation of Egypt's Jewish community would certainly be in jeopardy. The extent of this danger depends entirely on the phenomenon which colors all events in modern Egypt—the extremity of nationalism prevailing at that time.

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THE POSTWAR REVIVAL OF THE SYNAGOGUE

Does it Reflect a Religious Reawakening?

WILL HERBERG

THERE is a religious revival under way among American Jews today. On this fact all informed persons whom I had the opportunity of consulting in recent months seem to be agreed, although each hastens to qualify and interpret the situation in a somewhat different way. The outward signs are obvious enough. Hundreds of synagogues and religious educational institutions are engaged in building-expansion programs; one exceptionally well-informed source put the figure close to a thousand. Synagogue membership is probably at a record level. Many synagogues, indeed, have been compelled to close their books and establish waiting lists, while others have set up subsidiaries or have helped found entirely new institutions to take care of the overflow. Attendance is also markedly on the increase, not only during the High Holidays, but even at the regular Friday night or Saturday morning services. Hebrew and religious schools, particularly day schools, are making notable gains. As for higher education, the Jewish Theological Seminary reported the largest freshman class in its history last year. Both the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion and the Yeshiva University, the other two leading seminaries, are extending their scope and activities, and scores of small yeshivas of varying pretensions have sprung up in the larger Jewish centers.

Not only have synagogue affiliation and attendance been growing, but, according to my informants, the members of the congregations—even of the Orthodox—are no longer primarily older people and immigrants. On the contrary, they are in good part American born and bred, young men and women in their twenties and thirties, with a sizable proportion of youngsters in their teens. Veterans have in many instances been active in initiating and building synagogues, and there is hardly a new housing project in any of the larger cities without its congregation. Reaching to some extent even beyond the circle of synagogue affiliation, the practice of certain Jewish observances in the home has been growing—particularly the blessing over the candles and the *kiddush* on the Sabbath eve and the fixing of the *mezuzah* to the doorpost. This is the general picture, and although not all of my informants would agree on every detail, it fairly well represents the consensus of experts.

BUT questions immediately arise. With all its gains, the synagogue still represents only a minority of American Jews. This minority is divided into a number of competing "movements," each striving to become *the* religious community. And over and above everything else, there are qualms concerning the real character of the current revival. Virtually every one of the rabbis, teachers, scholars, and publicists whom I consulted, after detailing the evidence of

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IT WAS not so long ago that rabbis and Jewish educators were lamenting the general lack of interest in all matters pertaining to the synagogue. Since the end of World War II, however, such plaints have become rather rare—perhaps because the rabbis and educators have been too busy with plans for new synagogues or with accommodating old buildings to newly swollen congregations and religious-school classes. What is the meaning of this sudden tide of popularity? Does it reflect a genuine revival of the religious impulse—or does it have other motivations? WILL HERBERG, after studying available information and discussing the subject with more than a score of our best-informed religious and community leaders, here attempts tentatively to answer these questions. Mr. Herberg's most recent article in COMMENTARY was "Has Judaism Still Power to Speak?" (May 1949).

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expansion, paused to add reflectively: "But how much *religion* is there in all that, I wonder?" A big element in the "boom," they thought, was the war and postwar prosperity, which gave many congregations the resources to get done what had long needed doing. Another important factor, in the view of many, was the urge to impress the "outside" world; this is what Paul Blanshard has, with undue severity, called the "technique of denominational display." But in every explanation offered of the rise of synagogue affiliation and attendance, the new urge to Jewish self-affirmation was mentioned first.

It is, of course, a commonplace that the events of the past two decades—the shattering experience of demonic anti-Semitism at one pole and the triumphant emergence of the State of Israel at the other—have helped reverse the trend toward assimilation that was once so rampant among American Jews. Today, the great mass of Jews in this country, even the younger generation, think of themselves as Jews, "accept" themselves as Jews. This new Jewish "pride" was particularly evident among soldiers in the late war. Rabbi Isaac Klein, in his very instructive report on the experiences of a Jewish chaplain,* tells of asking a young Jewish soldier his reason for showing such interest in religious services. The soldier's reply was that "since he had come into contact with so many non-Jewish soldiers, his Jewish pride demanded some expression, and the only way in the army was to come every Friday evening to services." Similarly with a number of Jewish doctors whom he interrogated: "They gave me the same answer. They felt that Jews had to identify themselves somehow, and going to services on Friday night was the only way."

Another factor, ranking in importance with this powerful need for self-identification, and in a sense an aspect of it, is the desire of parents, often themselves quite indifferent to religion, to give their children a "Jewish education." For most American Jews today, a "Jewish education" means an education with some Hebrew in it and at least peripherally religious. Hence it usually involves a bond with the synagogue.

To what degree is this concern for self-identification as a Jew religious? And why has the synagogue become the chosen means of Jewish self-identification? At other times and places, other means—political, social, and cultural—quite remote from religion and the synagogue, were found to satisfy the same desire. Why the new emphasis on the synagogue?

One explanation may well be that, under American conditions, it is very difficult for the Jew to know himself as a Jew except in some sort of religious terms. As Rabbi Jacob Agus has persuasively argued,* America knows no national minorities except as temporary and transitional phenomena. But America does know a free variety and plurality of religions, and it is as a member of a religious group that the great mass of Americans understand the status of the Jew in this country. Rabbi Agus voices the thinking of many in his conclusion that "Jews can be satisfactorily integrated within the American nation only as a religious community"—with the qualification, however, that it is a "religious community" broad enough somehow to include even those Jews who are indifferent or hostile to religion. And in fact, the average American Jew—I mean the Jew who is acculturated to America—if he thinks of himself as a Jew at all, tends almost automatically to think of himself as belonging to a kind of religious community, even if he himself does not happen to be religious. In the Vilna of the 1920's it was possible for a militantly anti-religious Jewish doctor to assert himself as a Jew by sending his children to a secular Yiddish school, and for some time the same pattern was familiar among Jewish immigrants in this country. Here in the United States, it has been possible to "be a Jew" through philanthropy and, more recently, through political Zionism. But today, if the American Jew is to

Yivo Bleter, volume xxvii, pages 186-194.

* "The Status of American Israel," *Conservative Judaism*, February 1946.

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feel himself a Jew, and is to be regarded by his Gentile friends and neighbors as a Jew, some religious association would seem to be indicated, however vague.

The importance of religion for the continuation of the Jewish people, which was once so self-evident and then so violently denied, has been tremendously reinforced by the social and spiritual upheavals of the past thirty years. I know of no better way of making this point clear than by quoting the words of a distinguished Jewish scholar of thoroughly secularist outlook: "Jewish religion has proved itself to be the most stormproof aspect of Jewish existence. It is the only force that can preserve the Jews as a group." Almost the same words were used by another informant of mine, a radical Socialist and Zionist of long standing.

The "survivalist" utility of Jewish religion has made a deep impression on people who only yesterday thought of religion as something they had dispensed with once and for all. And so, without seriously modifying their own indifference and skepticism, they are ready to adopt what might be called a *pro-religious attitude*. They are ready to associate themselves with a synagogue, give their children a "Jewish education," and perhaps even adopt certain of the traditional ritual observances in the home. With some, this "survivalist" attitude is a conscious and well-articulated ideology; for the most part, however, it is little more than a vague sentiment, though surely a very influential one.

What does this add up to? Not necessarily to the assertion that religion is actually becoming an important concern of life or that the synagogue as a religious institution is on the way to regaining the preeminence it once enjoyed; on the contrary, as we shall see, the tendency may well be the other way. What it does imply is some sort of general feeling that religion is a "good thing" for the continuation of the Jewish group in the present-day world and so ought to be "encouraged."

I do not, of course, mean to minimize the influence of truly religious need in bringing about the current synagogue revival. "Suffering," as Silone says, "has carved out new dimensions in our souls, of which we were unaware in 1919," and these new dimensions are undeniably religious. Certainly a high regard for Jewish religion merely as an effective instrument of group survival is worlds apart from authentic religious conviction and may even stand in direct opposition to it. Yet we must not ignore the "new dimensions in our souls," nor, for that matter, can we refuse some measure of religious value even to the impulse to group survival, since in the Jewish scheme of things the mere existence of the people Israel is of religious significance. In any case, motives are compounded on many levels, and the problem is a complicated and many-sided one. While every serious observer of the present situation will be cautious about simply identifying building programs and increased synagogue membership with an authentic awakening of religious life, he will by no means exclude the latter as a factor in the total situation.

THE three main groups into which the synagogue in America is divided—Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform—have all benefited, though to varying degrees, from the expansion of recent years.

The nature of these divisions in the American synagogue is a perplexing problem to sociologist and theologian alike. They are not sects or denominations in the usual sense, for they do not differ significantly as bodies in creed, rite, liturgy, or corporate government. Indeed differences in these respects among American Jews today cut across all group lines. Solomon Schechter called them "parties," thus implying that each had its legitimate place in the totality of Israel. Their character has, however, changed rather markedly in the last generation.

The early Jewish communities in this country were mainly Sephardic and were, of course, Orthodox. Before the middle of the 19th century, the first signs of the Reform movement began to show themselves, partly under the influence of German Reform and partly as a parallel development on Amer-

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ican soil. American Reform leaders were sufficiently far from the traditional norm to make their development as a separate tendency inevitable. The chief Reform institutions, established in the 1870's and 1880's, were originally meant to be all-inclusive, but they soon became almost entirely partisan in character, and so they have remained.

Meanwhile, in the older Jewish communities, a moderate reform movement was emerging with a program that stressed change of very limited scope in synagogue procedure and liturgy. It did not, like Reform, challenge the traditional concept of *halachah* as law (rather than as folkways) but instead merely insisted that this law be regarded as essentially historical and subject to change with changing conditions. In many ways, this tendency was akin to the Historical Judaism of Zechariah Frankel in Europe, and indeed the two streams later coalesced to form the modern Conservative movement.

With the "new" immigration towards the end of the century, Orthodoxy of the East European type was transplanted into this country and soon began to vie with the older tendencies. Both the Reform and the Conservative movements recruited heavily from its ranks, especially with advancing Americanization. Very soon, East European immigrants became the largest numerical group in most Jewish centers.

By the time of the First World War, the three tendencies were fairly well defined. Orthodoxy, however, still had a major transformation to undergo. For with the shutting off of immigration and the emergence of a new generation of American-born Jews of Orthodox leanings, differentiation rapidly developed in Orthodox ranks between the foreign-oriented immigrant group and a new "modern" or "American" Orthodoxy. In many ways, the latter began to approach the Conservative pattern in organization and activities.

Thus we have today in the United States a Conservative and a Reform group, each with its own seminary, rabbinical association, and synagogal union, and then an Orthodox tendency, in which the older immigrant and the newer American elements are separately organized. In addition, there are the Sephardim, who maintain institutions of their own.

As the American wing of Orthodoxy has become less "orthodox," in the older European sense, so has the Reform movement grown more traditional, especially in very recent years. The radical Reformism of earlier days is no longer dominant, although it is still not unknown in some sections of the country. "The spirit of self-criticism and dissatisfaction with the extreme departure of Reformism is common among the Reform rabbinate," reports Abraham G. Duker.* "Reform Judaism [is] retracing its steps to the middle ground in Judaism, so much so that it is difficult to distinguish between some Conservative synagogues and Reform temples. . . . " It is also, the same observer notes, "frequently difficult to distinguish between an Orthodox and a 'right-wing' Conservative synagogue or institution." Thus the old distinctions, rooted in historical, cultural, and even ethnic factors, and sometimes associated with important theological issues, are tending to disappear.

That does not mean that there are no differences in belief or practice in the American synagogue, but these differences, as I have suggested, cut across group lines and are not essentially "party" differences. It is true that fundamentalism is more common among the Orthodox and modernism more at home in the Reform camp. But Jewish religious life in this country is theologically so feeble that this doctrinal distinction is of little practical relevance. Most Conservative rabbis would agree with the Orthodox position on *halachah* as law, although insisting on its changing historical character, whereas most Reform rabbis show little interest in the matter. But in each camp there are plenty who differ with the majority view.

As to the general level of observance, it is hard to speak with any authority, but it is

* "On Religious Trends in American Jewish Life," *Yivo Annual IV* (1949).

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worth noting that an Orthodox publicist, Dr. Weiss-Rosmarin, quotes a member of an Orthodox synagogue as saying: "There is no difference in ritual observance [between the Orthodox and the non-Orthodox], except that they don't care if their rabbi, too, isn't observant, whereas we want the rabbi to eat kosher and keep Shabbes."* Conservative and Orthodox men cover the head during prayer and worship; Reform makes it "optional." The old-line Orthodox forbid, and the "modern" Orthodox still feel uneasy about, organs and mixed pews, whereas many Conservatives and almost all Reform people are accustomed to them. It would be hard to carry the list of differences much further. Even the earlier social and cultural distinctions have virtually disappeared, at least so far as the American groups are concerned. In education, outlook, economic position, and social standing, the membership of a "modern" Orthodox synagogue looks very much like the membership of a Conservative synagogue in the same locality, and neither differs markedly from the membership of the Reform temple, although some observers insist that the Reform group, at least in the older centers, still retains vestiges of its former social preeminence.

THE revival of religious concern among American Jews appears to have benefited the Conservative group most, for this group not only allows a wide range of variation but also seems best able to combine a considerable degree of traditionalism in the forms of religion with a modern and "American" outlook in everything else. It is undoubtedly significant that the younger generation of Jews who turn to religion are attracted not so much by religious modernism as by a certain amount of Orthodoxy in belief and practice, especially in liturgy, within the framework of a modern outlook. Conservatism seems well designed to meet this demand, which may be related to the feeling that a more distinctive Jewish observance better satisfies the need for self-identification.

*"From a Lecturer's Notebook," *Jewish Spectator*, April 1945.

The "modern" wing of Orthodoxy has also been making impressive headway. Its appeal is very much the same as that of Conservatism, and it has a rather greater attraction for young people brought up in Orthodox homes and accustomed to Orthodox ways. The Reform group appears not to have kept pace with the others, although there is some evidence that its recent shift in outlook on Zionism and ritual matters has strengthened its position.

Even the old-line immigrant Orthodoxy has been doing fairly well. But, by and large, it seems likely that whatever progress Orthodoxy is to make in this country in the future will be made by its "American" wing.

Meanwhile, the aims and purposes of the various groups are growing increasingly similar. Each of the three major divisions—the immigrant wing of Orthodoxy hardly comes into the picture here—is today essentially committed to a program of creating an indigenous pattern for all American Jews along its own lines, with "the ultimate goal of becoming not, as formerly, the major party in American Judaism, but American Judaism itself."* The favorable conditions of recent years have encouraged these ambitions.

Religious statistics relating to American Jews are notoriously hard to obtain and largely inaccurate. The best information would seem to indicate that in 1949 the Conservative United Synagogue of America had 365 synagogues affiliated with it, the Reform Union of American Hebrew Congregations had 392, and the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations 500, with an unknown number of congregations, largely Orthodox, unaffiliated. (Each of these groups claims and is credited with a varying influence beyond its circle of affiliates.) What these figures mean in terms of individuals is merely a guess, since the congregations differ greatly in size. Dr. Davis states "the total estimated congregational membership based on family affiliations" to be "about 1,500,000 individual Jews," but this probably includes scores of

*Moshe Davis, "Jewish Religious Life and Institutions in America," *The Jews*, ed. by Louis Finkelstein.

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thousands whose connection with the synagogue is limited to attendance on the High Holidays. It is generaly agreed that the actual figure would be considerably lower.

EVEN the most cursory survey is bound to raise questions as to the reason and justification for the maintenance of existing "party" lines. The original historical causes are virtually gone, no new ones of a compelling character appear to have arisen, and yet the division persists. There are, of course, a number of all-inclusive bodies, such as the Jewish Welfare Board, which was formed in 1917 to minister to the religious and social needs of Jewish soldiers and has since performed a variety of other functions; the Synagogue Council of America, set up in 1926 as a delegate body of the three "parties" for their common religious interests; and a few local joint rabbinical associations (New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, etc.). But these are all agencies for specific purposes and are vested with very limited powers; they do not bring American Jewry much nearer to the religious unity that every one professes to desire. The situation is particularly anomalous since in the armed forces during World War II, where the official "party" lines could not be preserved and Jewish chaplains had to serve their people simply as Jews, a common pattern—essentially Conservative—quickly developed that overrode the distinctions which loom so large in civilian life.*

To be sure, considerable talk about unity has been heard in recent years. Rabbi Morris Lieberman, in his address at the exercises opening the seventy-fifth academic year of Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati on October 15, 1949, called for the merger of the Reform and Conservative groups, asserting that the differences between them were "chronological, quantitative, and personal, not ideological." But Rabbi Lieberman apparently saw no possibility of union with the Orthodox wing. From the Orthodox side have come more ambitious plans. The emergence of the State of Israel, in which the Orthodox Chief Rabbinate enjoys exclusive jurisdiction in religious matters, seems to have fanned the hope in Orthodox circles of overcoming the division in the American synagogue by uniting it in obedience to the Chief Rabbinate in Jerusalem, very much, to use the analogy of Chief Rabbi Herzog's secretary, as Roman Catholics are united in their obedience to the Pope. Rabbi Israel Tabak, head of the Orthodox Rabbinical Council of America, President Samuel Belkin of the Yeshiva University, and others have endorsed this project, but it has naturally not commended itself to Reform and Conservative circles. Indeed, it does not appear that even the Orthodox element in this country is of one mind. Chief Rabbi Herzog's official contacts in the United States seem to be limited to the "modern" Orthodox group, so that the old-line Orthodox rabbis have been moved to lodge vehement protests against the "recognition" thus granted their "American" colleagues.

The most serious plea for a rapprochement of the three "parties" in American Jewry was made, in my opinion, by the Jewish chaplains. The first national convention of their association, meeting in New York in 1947, adopted a resolution that deserves to be remembered:

"We, chaplains who served in this last war, alumni of the three major rabbinic seminaries and representatives of the Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform ideologies within American Judaism, unanimously affirm that the mutuality, fellowship, and comradeship which united us in our common service of God and country proved a most enriching spiritual experience which we aim to apply in our civilian ministry. To expand and extend the blessings of this creative fellowship, we urge upon the three rabbinic bodies to project plans for their respective national conventions in a manner that would provide, once every three years, a simultaneous session of the three bodies."

But even this modest request has met with little encouragement. As far back as 1943, indeed, a joint session of the Con-

*See Philip Bernstein, "Jewish Chaplains in World War II," *American Jewish Year Book*, vol. 47 (1945-6).

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servative and Reform rabbinical conventions was held in New York, but this precedent has not been followed. Nor has it proved possible to form local or regional synagogue councils, patterned after the national Synagogue Council, even for the most limited purposes.

As far as official action is concerned, the religious unification of American Jewry is as remote as ever, despite the impressive evidence of the war experience that the "party" differences are not fundamental and can be overcome where the need and pressure are great enough.

WHAT is it that perpetuates the "party" separatism and stands in the way of a rapprochement? We should not, of course, ignore official "philosophies" and platforms or such factors as "differences of temper and temperament, of training and surroundings," to which Schechter referred. But neither should institutional considerations be overlooked. Institutions and movements have a logic of their own. Once they get under way, corporate interest becomes a consideration in its own right, and appropriate loyalties, ideologies, and prejudices do not delay in making their appearance. And it is surely no ground for surprise that an institution with a history of useful work will go ahead doing its work with a clear conscience, without considering the possibility that this work might be done as well or perhaps even better if its own institutional identity were absorbed in a larger whole. Nor is it much to be wondered at that it will tend to exaggerate its special points of difference to the proportions where they can serve as a satisfactory *raison d'être*. Such things are not unknown in the life of organizations, and rabbinical or synagogal organizations are organizations like any other. In my discussions with Jewish leaders of various shades of opinion, there was usually some connection discernible between one's attitude towards the problem of religious unity and the estimate of the prospects of one's own "party." It is not altogether accidental perhaps that Conservative spokesmen have done the least talking on this question. After all, most observers agree with Duker that the "unmistakable trend" is towards the "middle ground," which is precisely the ground occupied by Conservatism.

All in all, the outlook for the organizational unification of the three movements into one united synagogue cannot be said to be very promising. But the problem will not down, for a situation in which the religious community is divided into rival and competing groups, each trying to create its own "movement" but unable to establish fellowship with the others, is certainly not something that can be accepted with complacency or indifference.* A number of my informants thought they discerned a new type of religious Jew emerging in America, a Jew to whom the beliefs and traditions of Judaism are not merely inherited routine but something new, personal, and exciting. To this type of "new" Jew—and there may be more of them than we suspect, especially among the younger people—the old distinctions and divisions appear rather remote and artificial, as they seemed to so many in the army. Whatever kind of synagogue they join, they are really independents who transcend "party" lines. Perhaps this type of Jew will have something to say about the fashioning of synagogue life in America.

BUT the divisions within the synagogue, however large they may loom when seen from the inside, are trifling compared to the great gulf that today separates the synagogue as a whole from the vital areas of Jewish life. Let it not be forgotten, in the first place, that out of the close to five million Jews in this country, no more than one and a half

*Various current plans proposed by religious leaders to unify the Jewish community around the primacy of the synagogue are placed in a doubtful light, a number of observers comment, by the inability of the chief religious groups to find enough accord among themselves to cooperate upon anything beyond the most limited objectives. If they show so little capacity for unity among themselves, how, it is queried, can religious leadership hope to be the chief force for ending divisiveness and disunity in Jewish community life?

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million—or less than a third—have even the remotest connection with the synagogue. Public-opinion surveys some years ago indicated that hardly eighteen per cent of American Jews attended religious services at least once a month. In the army, according to Rabbi Klein, the figure rose to thirty-one per cent, but it is certain that army conditions were not carried over to civilian life at the end of the war. Some increase there has been, as we have seen, but when all is allowed for, it must be admitted that only a minority of American Jews are in any important way associated with the synagogue.

Even the minority of Jews who do belong to the synagogue do not as a rule find it the center of their interest as men and as Jews. Other concerns—Zionism, labor unionism, philanthropy, social service, "anti-defamation"—seem closer and more deeply related to the immediacies of life and the core of personal emotion; and with these concerns religion and the synagogue appear to have very little to do. Religion is, in fact, often regarded as a kind of leisure-time, supplemental activity, and the synagogue as something you belong to because you "happen" to be a Jew.

This strikes us as so natural that we rarely pause to think what it really means. Most synagogue leaders, if I am to judge by those with whom I have discussed the matter, simply take the situation for granted. After all, they say, there are so many things demanding attention in the modern world; the synagogue is just one of the many institutions in Jewish life; it may be too bad, but that's how things are. What is not sufficiently appreciated is that, however natural it may appear to us, the present position of the synagogue in relation to Jewish life represents probably the sharpest break with fundamental Jewish tradition that modern history has witnessed. It represents the fragmentation of Jewish existence, and the secularization of Jewish institutions and activities.

Until the 19th century, all Jewish activities—work, education, philanthropy—were in some sense religious activities, and the synagogue was at the heart of Jewish life. But new interests began to arise for which the traditional Jewish community was either unwilling or unable to find a place. Chief among these new interests were Zionism, labor socialism, and modern learning. It has been said that the Jewish labor-socialist movement in East Europe emerged as a veritable schism in the Jewish community, the first of any importance since Karaism. This is profoundly true, and the same may be said, with some qualification, of the rise of Zionism at the end of the 19th century or even of the *haskalah* somewhat earlier. They could not develop within the established Jewish community and so they broke through its limits and set themselves up as autonomous interests. Jewish life lost its unity and, for increasing numbers, the synagogue became an altogether secondary institution. Actually, the labor-socialist movement, and to some extent Zionism too, came into being not simply outside the sphere of the synagogue but in bitter hostility to it. They were, in fact, anti-religious movements, though not always ready to avow themselves as such.

IT WOULD be pointless, at this stage, to try to assess and distribute responsibility for this development which destroyed the integral pattern of Jewish community life. After all, very much the same thing had been going on for some centuries in Christian Europe. It was part of the emergence of the modern world. Modernity came late to the Jewish communities in Central and Eastern Europe, but for that very reason its impact proved especially devastating. Within one or two generations, the greater part of European Jewry passed directly from the Middle Ages to modern secularism. The organic Jewish community was shattered, and the fragments, flying apart, began to establish themselves as independent centers of Jewish life.

Today, almost everything that is vital in American Jewish life is carried on outside the sphere of influence of religion. The estrangement of most Jews from the synagogue, as well as the disunity within it, seem to render this state of affairs inevitable and

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may even give it the appearance of normality but it is a normality that spells defeat for the synagogue. Jewish religious leaders are frequently so busy equipping their particular "movement" to take over American Judaism that they do not see what is happening before their very eyes.

The failure of the synagogue is reflected in its relation to the Jewish workers. The workers are, of course, not the only group of American Jews remote from the synagogue, but their case is perhaps most symptomatic. By its social conservatism and lack of concern for the problems of the working class, the European synagogue contributed to the bitter anti-religious fixation with which the Jewish labor-socialist movement was born and which it brought with it to this country. Here in the United States, Jewish labor developed a rich community life of its own from which religion and the synagogue were rigorously excluded. Even today, when much of the earlier bitterness has been dissipated by time and circumstance and Jewish labor leaders are beginning to look upon religion as a "good thing," the essential alienation of the organized Jewish industrial worker from religion and the synagogue remains a conspicuous fact. The Jewish worker no longer goes out of his way to flaunt his contempt for religion; he does something much more disturbing: he ignores it as irrelevant. He is often actively involved in Jewish affairs (Zionism, philanthropy and relief, activity against anti-Semitism), as well as in the affairs of his trade and union, but frankly, he just doesn't see where religion and the synagogue have any bearing on these matters. This is usually just as true of trade unionists who happen to be affiliated with the synagogue as of those who, like the older generation of Jewish labor leaders, still remain remote from it.

Nowhere in the course of my inquiries among religious leaders did I find much concern with this situation. By and large, the Jewish worker, and especially the Jewish unionist, has been written off, and the synagogue is content to remain a middle-class institution. It quiets its social conscience by passing all kinds of radical resolutions at the annual conferences, but these resolutions bear no relation to the actualities of its institutional life or to the lives of its members. Thus is one of the largest and socially most significant sections of American Jewry virtually given up as far as the synagogue is concerned. And what is true of Jewish labor is true of other groups of American Jews as well—intellectuals, particularly—though perhaps not to the same degree.

WHILE the synagogue is in this way being relegated to the periphery of Jewish life, it is undergoing a certain inner decay as well, and indeed, its own kind of secularization. To put it plainly, the synagogue in America no longer represents a community of believers. Nothing in the way of belief or practice—not even the belief in God or the practice of the most elementary *mitzvot*—may be taken for granted among synagogue members. This is basically just as true of the Orthodox group as of the Conservative or Reform. I was amazed at the indifference of many religious leaders in the face of this situation. Some told me that "after all, we Jews don't go in for dogmas," and others simply shrugged their shoulders in resignation. The fact itself virtually no one felt it possible to deny. This means that, in a very basic respect, the synagogue of today is no longer the synagogue of the entire Jewish past. There have always been unbelievers and there have always been those who paid little attention to religious belief and observance, but in former times these people were relatively few, and, what is more important, they were held in reproach by themselves and their fellow-Jews. Only since the last century, and perhaps only in the past generation or two, has it become "normal" for Jews, and even for synagogue members, to believe in and observe nothing in particular. This is surely something portentous.

Building expansion, the growth of the synagogue in membership and attendance, as well as the other aspects of the current revival, are undeniable and important facts; but they must not be permitted to obscure

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our understanding of certain deeper processes that are surely more fateful for the future of Judaism in America. On the one hand, the Jewish community is broken into bits, with each fragment an independent entity competing for total allegiance at the expense of the synagogue. On the other hand, the synagogue itself has ceased to be a community of believers in the traditional or any other sense. It is becoming an institution in which religion is no longer indispensable.

What could be done about this situation, even if there were a desire to do anything about it, is not clear. Vital religion is not something that can be brought into being by campaigns and propaganda. We cannot, nor do most of us want to, undo the effects of Emancipation and bring back the Jewish community of a hundred and fifty years ago. If the renovation of the synagogue and the Jewish community is to be effected at all, it will have to be effected in accordance with the conditions of modern life.

THERE are those who think that they can rebuild the Jewish community by shifting its base from religion to some secular concern – Zionism, "national culture," and the like—on the ground that the modern Jew is incorrigibly secular-minded. But such programs are bound to prove vain and delusive. It is difficult to see how any merely secular Jewish community can in the long run prove viable, in the modern world any more than in earlier times. Collective Jewish existence has always been and is, by its very nature, essentially and inherently religious. Saadya said the last word on the subject when he stated: "Our people are a people only by virtue of its Torah." It can be taken as a conclusion warranted by all history and experience that if the Jewish people is to survive in the modern world, above all in America, it can only do so as a religious community, and that means a community in which the synagogue as a *religious* institution is restored to central place.

Linking the adjective "religious" to the noun "synagogue" is not in our day a mere redundancy. Many rabbinical spokesmen and educators who proclaim the need for a synagogue-centered community seem to think of the synagogue as just another institution absorbed in the round of institutional affairs. But it would surely be no gain to Judaism for the synagogue to become central in community life if the synagogue itself is so busy with other things that it has but little concern for trying to develop the power of religion as a transforming force in the lives of its members. Even granting that a *secular* synagogue could compete successfully with or dominate other secular institutions, which is by no means certain, mere hegemony without the bond of faith and commitment would only tend to repeat in a somewhat different form the 19th-century experience—the very experience out of which the contemporary crisis in the synagogue has grown.

But the power of faith is a power for life, and religious concern cannot mean withdrawal from the ongoing affairs of existence. If the "secular" synagogue merely touches the externals of life, the "spiritual" synagogue that abjures the world, or ministers only to one side of the personal life of the Jew, can never be more than a peripheral institution without vital significance. Jewish faith knows no such separation between religion and the world: all of the affairs of life stand under divine law and divine judgment, and all are therefore the concern of religion. To the extent that it has tended to accept a departmentalization of life in one form or the other, the modern American synagogue—Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform alike—has broken with one of the central affirmations of Jewish religion. For, in the Jewish view, religion is not just a phase or area of life, however important; nor is it a collection of external activities invested with a "religious" aura. In the Jewish view, religion irradiates the totality of life—but life in its ultimate concern.

Judaism counted so greatly for Jews in the past because it served the deep need of human beings for some vision to give meaning to everything they did and were and to relate their individual daily acts and the destiny of the historic community of which

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they were members to some great design in line with eternal values and purposes. In view of all that the present generation of Jews has seen and suffered, who can gainsay that many who are today turning to the synagogue may be seeking a similar faith?

Two main trends, we have said, seem compounded in the current revival of religion among American Jews. On the one side is the "survivalist" urge to individual self-identification and the enhancement of the Jewish communal position in the pattern of American life. On the other, perhaps less prevalent but undoubtedly widespread, is the search for a saving faith, a total existential commitment, in terms of which one's life may be related significantly to ultimate reality. The two are often fused in motivation and expression. Synagogue building and institutional growth may more obviously reflect the one, and mounting interest in religious thinking the other, but the distinction is relative and cannot be pushed beyond a certain point.

Let us not be misled by labels. Some of my non-rabbinical informants made a point of emphasizing, and I think with some justice, that ostensibly "secular" activities outside the synagogue might in fact be serving as a more genuine vehicle of religious commitment and values than certain activities currently associated with the synagogue. A man may throw himself into Jewish philanthropic or "defense" work, or even fund-raising, because he has acquired a keen sense of vocation, while on the other hand, religious affiliation may often turn out to be motivated by little more than a desire to overcome one's sense of isolation from the larger group through self-identification as a Jew. Similarly it is important, I think, to recognize the authentic religious significance of much of the new thinking going on in Jewish intellectual circles today, even though such thinking is carried on largely outside the sphere of the synagogue. As a matter of fact, in comparison with the deeply religious concern that seems to pervade some of this thinking, it is the synagogue that often strikes one as secular in its orientation and interests. Indeed, is there not some warrant for the assertion, often made, that many a synagogue has become so completely secularized that it is neither a center for teaching, study, and worship, nor a community of believers, but simply a large institution entangled in a multiplicity of external activities without religious content or meaning? Such activities may seem to compensate for the growing estrangement of the synagogue from the deeper concerns of human existence; actually they but aggravate the emptiness and unreality of so much of conventional religion. I call to mind the distinguished rabbi who rather impatiently complained that Jewish intellectuals were "unhealthily" absorbed in "mystical questions," instead of being "active" in the synagogue.

It seems to me—and here I find support in the comments made by one or two of the more thoughtful religious leaders whom I consulted—that the reconstitution of the synagogue into a force capable of playing in our time the same central role it played in the best periods of Jewish history demands a return to religious essentials. For this, the first step is a fresh, unprejudiced approach; a readiness to detect and to cherish every sign of authentic religious concern, however unfamiliar or conventionally "unreligious" it may seem. It calls—to employ the cabalistic figure—for an earnest effort to seek out and gather the sparks of faith hidden among the fragments of contemporary Jewish existence. It involves the return of the rabbi from his present functions as administrator, political leader, and popular lecturer, to his earlier and more authentic role of religious teacher and counselor. Most of all it implies a synagogue interested primarily not in making itself dominant as an organization but in helping to make Judaism operative in the hearts and lives of the Jews whom it reaches.

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SAVING ASIA FOR DEMOCRACY

A Realistic Basis for American Policy in the Far East

SIDNEY HERTZBERG

WE HAVE fallen flat on our faces in China. Our injured pride prompts us to ignore the rest of Asia and sulk or to lash about angrily until we fall again. But by now we recognize that both reactions are childish.

We are beginning to face the fact that unless Asia too becomes part of a democratic world order, America's vast efforts in Europe may be nullified. This means evolving a long-term policy for Asia that may involve an even greater drain on our physical and intellectual resources than our commitments in Europe. Yet we know very little about Asia. We don't quite respect Asians as equals. We will be less willing to make sacrifices for them than for Europeans and we will be more impatient for results. All this, considering the fact that Asia is a much more complex problem than Europe, makes a perfect background for disaster.

Presumably the objective of our policy in Asia—as elsewhere—is the strengthening of democratic forces. What democratic forces are there today in Asia, what are they like, what do they think of us, what are their current chances of success?

ANY consideration of Asian democracy is futile without first disposing of the view that, with the victory of the Chinese Communists, it is too late to save Asia from Communism without war against the Soviet Union. Probably many more Americans believe this than are willing to admit it openly or advocate it immediately. There is no way of proving that it is not too late for measures short of war. There is much evidence that it is. Yet it may be taken as axiomatic that the long-term offensive against Communism in Asia—or anywhere else—requires the same broadly applicable strategy, whether the hour is midnight, five minutes before, or five minutes after. It is past midnight in China, yet American policy for China now cannot differ essentially from what it should be for all Asia—or from what it should have been before the clock struck. All we have to offer is support for democratic forces and that is all we ever had to offer. In any case, the alternative policy of war is at best a short-term, not a long-term, policy; at worst, especially considering the existence of atomic weapons, it is no policy at all.

Another preliminary to any discussion of Asia policy is some notion of how high a priority it deserves.

Today for the first time, the weight of Asia in the world can be proportional to the size of its population, the extent of its resources, and the creativeness of its intellectual leadership. It may even become the decisive weight in world affairs and it can fall into the democratic or the totalitarian side of the scale. The kind of impact resurgent Asia can have on the world is already demonstrated

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THE Communist conquest of China has been the occasion for an intense re-evaluation of our responsibilities—and opportunities—in all of Asia. Here, SIDNEY HERTZBERG describes the "facts of life" of which the United States must be aware in that chaotic area, if it is to link East and West in the world struggle for democracy. Mr. Hertzberg has traveled widely in the Far East, most recently in 1948, when he spent five months in Asia as regional representative of the UN Appeal for Children, covering close to fifty thousand miles, in visits to India, Burma, Pakistan, Ceylon, Thailand, China, and the Philippines. He interviewed Mahatma Gandhi three days before his assassination and was present in India to witness the aftermath of Gandhi's death. Mr. Hertzberg has been a foreign correspondent for the New York *Times*, associate editor of *Current History*, contributing editor of *Time*, editor of *Common Sense*, and conducted "The Month in History" department in this magazine for two years. Mr. Hertzberg was born in New York City in 1910.

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by two great events. The first is the Chinese revolution which, for internal and external reasons, foundered and now seeks fulfillment in Communism. The result is a momentous shift in the balance of world forces. The second is the Indian revolution, unique in history, which produced in Gandhi the most influential moral leader of modern times and also, perhaps by virtue of his moral leadership, the most effective political leader of the age. As subject India was the keystone of Pax Britannia, which in its day was a kind of world order, so free India can be the Asian anchorage of a democratic world order.

We must rid ourselves of the notion that Asia is beyond our understanding. For our purposes we need not linger over the spiritual mysteries of the East. Nationalism is winning in Asia because Asians want freedom from alien oppression. Communism is winning in China because the Chinese want an end of chaotic misery. There is nothing in these social phenomena that need baffle the Western mind. Inevitably the future society of revolutionary Asia will be greatly affected by the mores of the Asian peoples. But Asians do not prefer contemplation over rice, and they are quite capable of running steel mills. Their reactions to basic social conditions are essentially the same as ours and we can accept this fact as a guide to formulating a policy without waiting for the philosophers to achieve the concord of the Bible and the Bhagavad-Gita.

The cardinal fact about the people of Asia is their poverty. If Asian poverty did not upset the equilibrium of the world during the imperialist era of rule by oppression, it is now due to emerge as one of the most dynamic social facts of our times. For the Asians, who resented foreign rule above all other evils, are now free to resent poverty as the primary evil. This poverty plus the feeling of exhilaration flowing from triumphant nationalism is an explosive differing from the atom bomb only in that it is harder to control.

THE most obvious and most frightening fact about the democratic forces in Asia is that they are so few in contrast to Europe.

Democracy in Western Europe is part of the social fabric. Europeans are fighting for it without any need of persuasion from the United States. The democrats of Europe survived two wars in which their suffering was immeasurably greater than ours. Whole nations and populations of Europe are our allies. Democracy in Europe is based on a standard of living which the Soviet Union cannot yet match and it has great ideological and organizational resources to fall back on.

This is not so in Asia. There can be no democratic — or anti-democratic — nations or populations in Asia today. The characteristics of the Asian body politic are still unformed. The most that can be said is that, as a concomitant of Asia's urge to national self-determination, there is a vague desire for individual self-determination. Asia's sole experience with democracy in the modern sense is in its nationalist movements, an experience more useful for oppositionist agitation than for responsible nation-building.

But Asia does have great democratic leaders, and, among its educated minority, vigorous democratic organizations. The point to remember is that these leaders are a handful perched on a restless mass to whom the concept of democracy is virtually unknown. They enjoy wide popularity, but it is a popularity based on their effectiveness as nationalists and not as advocates of democracy. The late Subhas Chandra Bose, an Indian nationalist leader who went over to the Axis, is still a hero among Indians who also revere Jawaharlal Nehru, a man who vigorously opposed the fascists when they were abetted by his sometime jailer, Winston Churchill.

The goal in Asia must be to move quickly and peacefully from feudalism to a modern democratic way of life. This task involves increasing productivity fast enough to outstrip the accelerated increase in population, and spreading education fast enough to support the development of a democratic political system. In extent and complexity of coordination, the problem is a hard test of human ingenuity under the most favorable

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circumstances. But the debris of the imperialist era and the aftermath of nationalism will complicate it further.

Anti-imperialists of the East and West have sometimes left the impression that the victory of nationalism in Asia is a guarantee of democracy and well-being. It is not. It is a precondition of democracy. Asian nationalism is essentially a struggle against foreign domination. While it professes positive democratic ideals that are not to be found in, say, Arab nationalism, these are not basic to the central purpose of nationalism. The prime motivating force, the vital source of strength and cohesion, is anti-imperialism. As imperialism disappears, its cohesive effect disappears. The discordant elements that united under the anti-imperialist banner begin to emerge as independent and conflicting entities.

The social factors that in older nations are often an element of stability become in Asia serious threats to progress and to national integrity. Religion, for example, was the basis for creating Pakistan, and today the peaceful development of India and Pakistan is thwarted by the threat of war over Kashmir. Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam will hinder the development of secular states. Language, usually an effective agent of national unification, is a divisive factor in Asia. So complex are the language differences in India that a movement for re-drawing provinces along linguistic lines has strong support and English will be retained as an official language for at least fifteen years. Asia is overflowing with great cultural traditions, but their only current utility seems to be as supports for xenophobia and anti-industrialism.

Easily aroused ethnic loyalties can become stronger than national patriotism. The Karens who want Karenistan have plunged Burma into a disastrous civil war. The Sikhs who want Sikhistan would be delighted to see India fight Pakistan for it. And the Pathans who want Pathanistan would be glad to get it out of a war between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Nationalism, after it has achieved liberation from all foreign domination, can thus lead to senseless fragmentation.

At the same time, the growing populations of Asia's under-developed countries create not only domestic problems, but also serious tensions among Asian nations. The Chinese have spilled over into Malaya, Thailand, Indonesia, Viet Nam, and the Philippines. The Indians have pressed down into Ceylon, Burma, and Malaya. These millions of migrants from the two giant nations of Asia have created in the smaller nations bitter resentment, conflict, and fear of domination. Since many of the Chinese and Indian migrants became the merchants and money-lenders of South Asia, they have earned the hatred of the impoverished. Indeed, detestation of the Chinese usurer often extends to all things Chinese and is not to be underestimated as a force against Chinese Communism.

What is left in the way of a broadly unifying force in Asia is the immemorial cohesive power of poverty. And in each country this is in conflict with the immemorial unity of the privileged, fighting to retain their privileges.

Democratic progress in Asia will have to overcome all these potentialities of chaos and, at every faltering step, there will be leaders who, to maintain power or to achieve it, will not hesitate to blame the West, scuttle democracy as an unnecessary handicap, and relapse into despotism.

IF WE are to deal successfully with the democratic forces of Asia, we must know what their main motivations are and what attitudes toward us arise out of them.

The special character of Asian democracy is formed by three closely-related impulses: (1) insistence on complete sovereignty, (2) opposition to racial discrimination, (3) economic collectivism.

Asia's opposition to imperialism implies a simple, concrete, and inflexible aim: full national sovereignty — sovereignty without strings and not as a vague promise but as an unchangeable commitment for a definite date in the early future. The achievement of this aim is the unavoidable prerequisite

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to normal relations between East and West. Sovereignty in Asia can be both good and bad for democracy; denial of sovereignty can only be bad.

The British Labor government was the first to absorb this truth after the war and to act on it. By so doing, Britain, once the leading imperialist power, gave democracy its chance in Asia. The exodus from India, followed by the withdrawal from Burma and the granting of Dominion status to Ceylon, was the only kind of action that could have averted a catastrophic break between the West and an Asian nationalism that would no longer be denied. Had Britain tried to hold the Indian area by force, all Asia would have become convinced that its only hope against Western imperialism was an alliance with Communism. But the British withdrawals upset the neat Leninist predictions of imperialist conduct and demonstrated to Asian nationalists—much to their amazement—that a civilized accommodation with their former masters was not impossible. In Indonesia, the Dutch reluctantly followed the British example in India; but the French have lost their chance in Indo-China.

There is a school of thought which is anti-imperialist in good faith but impatient with the Asian insistence on sovereignty. After all, the argument runs, nationalism is outmoded; sovereignty must now be discarded, not hoarded; the great need of the moment is world government and world economic planning to meet the needs of all people. These are unexceptionable sentiments to which the democratic statesmen of Asia will readily agree. But in order to shed sovereignty they must first have it. They would probably deposit substantial portions of their sovereignty with international political and economic institutions if other nations were ready to do the same; but they are unwilling to leave any of it with their former rulers.

Another Western approach assures the Asian nationalist that he is quite justified in wanting full independence, but reminds him that he is not ready for it and needs the experience and protection of the old administrators to prepare him for the final break. It is true that political instability is almost a certainty following a grant of independence. It is also true that long-established economic relationships, even on unequal terms, cannot be broken without inviting an economic crisis. But, perhaps unfortunately, Asian nationalists can only regard this approach as an effort to forestall the full independence they see within their grasp. Moreover the superior experience in the political and economic ways of the world which propitiatory imperialists proffer does not impress colonial peoples. To them, the import of this experience lies only in its extraordinary agility in maintaining political and economic advantage for the metropolitan powers.

It is fashionable to offer Burma, the two-year-old republic now struggling through a complicated civil war, as an example of the dangers involved in granting independence "too quickly." Burma is certainly experiencing more than the normal expectation of internal turmoil for new nations. But the lesson of Burma is that its troubles, in the end, could only have been worse, not easier, had the British remained. The internal tensions were there. An imperial power has no interest in easing them. It will try to control tensions that are serious enough to inconvenience its rule. But more often it encourages divisions in order to weaken the unity of a nationalist movement. In any case, whatever its intentions, an imperial power is simply unacceptable as a mediator of internal conflicts. It is a pariah. No group in a nation inflamed with nationalism can afford a favor from a foreign ruler. The British in Burma, by their presence, created a degree of temporary internal unity directed against themselves. Internal divisions were bound to reappear whenever they left, and the longer they remained the more explosive these divisions would have become.

The fact is that there is a point of diminishing returns for ruling nations in colonial areas. When it is reached, the soundest course—because it is the best hope of cooperation—is a clean break, as in India and Indonesia. The longer imperialist powers delay

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this unavoidable act, the less value it will have for themselves and for the cause of democracy. Full independence is not an arguable question with Asians. It is a psychological—almost a physical—necessity. It is the only catharsis that can eliminate the bitterness of the colonial era. No Asian democrat can demand less without committing political suicide.

Moreover, independence must be granted wholeheartedly, not in a spirit of bitter retreat, but in the conviction that the way to mutual survival has finally been found. And it must be supported by concrete plans for cooperation based on the new relationship of equals. This approach is necessary because the United States cannot be concerned simply with the avoidance of mutual throat-cutting between East and West; that is not enough for the victory of democracy.

All these considerations must guide Western policy in the remaining subject areas of Asia. What the West does in Viet Nam and Malaya, for example, will affect the fortunes of democracy not only in those two countries, but also in the rest of Asia, which will long retain its skepticism of Western sincerity in liquidating colonialism.

Asia's sensitivity to the slightest sign of imperialism calls for special attention from American policy-makers. Asia's nationalists know that their victory over European imperialism is nearing completion. But the United States, which has assumed the role of protector of Western civilization and has given priority to "Western" in the geographical rather than the ideological sense, now appears to the Asian as the intimation of a new imperialism—less ruthless, certainly, but more insinuating. We can still dispel this fear, but we must be aware of our disabilities.

Since the United States was born out of a struggle against foreign domination, and since we have been only a minor—and occasionally remorseful—partner in Asian imperialism, we were sometimes regarded as a potential ally by Asian nationalists. During the last war Asians hoped that the Atlantic Charter, though provincially named, would be applied to them; they had no such expectations from Winston Churchill, but they thought Franklin D. Roosevelt might do it. In the areas American troops helped liberate from the Japanese, there was for a short time a pulse-quickening hope that a liberator from all imperialism had also arrived. But then, with indecent haste, we reinstalled the recreant Dutch and French in their former rule over one hundred million Indonesians and Indo-Chinese. In the end, Asia's nationalists observed, all white men stick together; white imperialism is indivisible. The harm this public action has done America can be only partly overcome by diplomatic pressure on the Dutch and French to accommodate their rebellious colonials.

The United States should also avoid overestimating the value of its good deed in the Philippines. The inveterate Asian nationalist tends to write off the Filipino nationalist as teacher's pet. Independence does not seem genuine without much more suffering than the Filipinos had to endure. Some Indians are still examining their sovereignty for flaws because the British suddenly withdrew without waiting for the final conflict.

Nor does American control of Japan help measurably. However humane America's intentions toward the Japanese and the Pacific Islanders, the continuation of military rule in Japan and the Pacific Islands is to the Asian a threat of American domination. American militarization of Formosa would not have helped us in China, it would have frightened all South Asia, and it probably would have been highly unpopular with the Formosans, whose feelings in the matter remained, of course, uncanvassed. Even anti-Communist Asians are not mollified by our insistence that we are interested only in "containing" Communism. Capitalist imperialism still seems to many of them a more ponderable enemy than Communist imperialism. And they are worried that, in containing Communism, we will also "contain" their nationalist goals.

Americans may feel that they have given little ground for Asian fears of exploitative economic imperialism. But we are dealing

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with feelings that border on irrationality. Asian nationalists are sensitive to the point of phobia about a renewal of economic domination by foreign capital. Foreign enterprise without foreign domination is unknown to their experience. In the countries that are already independent there is not yet a full realization that they are after all free to regulate foreign investment exactly as they see fit. They do not quite trust and are even ignorant of the protective measures of limitation and control they can enforce while enjoying the benefits of foreign investment.

Of course Asia wants American capital investment. But the more they want it, the less they will like us. The Asian nationalist, to whom the foreigner for so long meant economic exploitation, political impotence, and social inferiority, cannot readily swallow his new sovereign pride and come hat in hand to an all-powerful Western capitalism. There is a tendency to regard the United States as a necessary evil wherever its aid is needed. In Asia, this tendency will become dangerous unless we help readily, without being begged and without attaching onerous conditions.

In sum, Asian democrats will judge us by their own anti-imperialist criteria and not by ours. We may assume that they will watch closely every act, word, and innuendo of ours for signs of imperialism. And we may be sure that what the democrats miss the Communists will find.

THE resentment of Asia's democrats against racial discrimination is so intense that it can easily become a kind of racial chauvinism directed against Westerners. It is, of course, an aspect of Asia's opposition to imperialism, but it has also become a self-propelled phenomenon. It has sensitized Asians to discrimination against anybody anywhere. Though we might repeal all our immigration exclusion acts, treat all Asians with punctiliousness and abjure every vestige of economic imperialism, Asian democrats will still bitterly denounce our discrimination against Negroes.

This consciousness of racial discrimination provoked many Indians to believe that we used the atom bomb in Japan and not in Germany because much as we hated the Germans they were, after all, white men.

Furthermore, Asians feel that the rules are stacked against them in the distribution of international relief and that the United Nations itself is too Europe-oriented. There is solid ground for these feelings. Postwar international relief was distributed on the basis of highest priority to narrowly-defined "war-devastated areas" and not in accordance with absolute need. The Charter of the United Nations provides for equitable geographic distribution of the non-permanent seats on the Security Council; yet the gentlemen's agreement under which these seats are allocated ignores the vast and populous sweep from Iran to the Philippines. India finally won a non-permanent seat on the Council, not as a representative of Asia, but as a British Commonwealth replacement for Canada.

America's only defense in these circumstances is a vigorous and continuous fight against discrimination at home and abroad. While Asians will not condone discrimination, they are likely to give us credit for a sustained effort to get rid of it.

The new nations of Asia will not reject our economic aid because the United States has color bars. But it is a condition that poisons the atmosphere. It lowers the Asians' resistance to every kind of propaganda against America and devalues democracy for them.

ECONOMIC collectivism, the third objective of Asian democracy, means at least state planning and the strategic participation of the state in economic enterprise. The state must designate the economic goals and it must find the capital, raw material, machinery, trained manpower, and markets. Only the state can coordinate the whole operation. Only the state can prepare the people to accept the new order. What is involved is more than economic rehabilitation and more than economic revolution; it is economic genesis.

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In industry, South Asia starts with an almost clean slate. India has important domestically-owned steel mills and textile factories and an extensive though run-down railway system. The rest of the area is largely a simple economy on which has been superimposed modern machinery for the extraction of natural resources, with the necessary harbors to get raw material out, and airfields to give foreign managers mobility. Except in India, there are no free enterprisers with the capital and ability to develop the great new economic frontier which is Asia. Therefore it must be the state that, with foreign help, will plan and carry out industrial development.

The economy of every country is still basically agrarian. Large landholdings must be redistributed; uneconomic small holdings must be increased in size. Large-scale collective farming is not now contemplated. The immediate needs are relief for the peasants from usurious rent, interest and taxation, and an increase in land yields through improvements in agricultural technique that are simple and inexpensive. This cannot be done without state direction.

No one in Asia seriously disputes the paramount role of the state in economic development. The only open question is whether this will prevent the growth of democracy. The answer is largely in the hands of the socialists, the only political group in Asia dedicated to both democracy and economic collectivism and prepared to attack the economic misery of Asia with the vigor and equalitarianism required to overtake the Communist advance.

One might therefore look for valuable results from a relationship between the socialists of Asia and Europe. But practically, the ideological tie has thus far been disastrous.

The British socialists are a special case because their government left India promptly and has carried out a domestic program that Asian socialists can admire. This they were able to do because they were in full control. But the participation of socialists in the coalition governments of the Netherlands and France has almost destroyed the influence of socialists in the nationalist movements of Indonesia and Viet Nam. While they did press for abandonment of colonialism, the minority socialist parties were unable to prevent Dutch "police actions" in Indonesia and a costly, unavailing French war against the main body of Viet Namese nationalism. The result has been a lumping of European socialists with European imperialists.

Asia's socialists, under the necessity of differentiating themselves from Europe's socialists, can either go Communist or intensify their nationalism to a point where the conciliatory attitude toward the West which might normally be expected of them becomes impossible.

It is a misfortune of history that socialism in Europe must face postwar decay, bankruptcy, and the Communist threat—plus the disintegration of empire, all at the same time. But nationalism in Asia is an inexorable force that will not be sidetracked into sympathetic contemplation of the unfortunate historical conjuncture in which European socialists and other presumptive opponents of imperialism find themselves. Asian nationalism can triumph without Asian socialists. But Asian democracy will be lost without them.

The socialists of Asia harbor no great expectations from American capitalism and therefore are immune to keen disappointments. They find American pressure on Europe to end colonialism such an unlikely historical oddity that they suspect its motive is the substitution of American imperialism. Nevertheless, Asian socialists, along with conservative nationalists, will welcome American capital investment so long as it is on its good behavior. Americans will not be expected to like state planning; we will be expected to accept it. Any effort to use American capital as a weapon against state economic development will be resented as imperialist interference. The prevention of such a possibility is, for Asian nationalists, one of the strongest reasons for state control of the economy.

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In the light of the foregoing, six broad observations about American policy seem justified.

1. If America really expects to be useful to democracy in Asia, we must reconcile ourselves to a long, hard pull. Certainly our policy must be carefully thought out and coordinated; it must also be applied with infinite patience. The European experience will not be too relevant. In Europe ERP dollars can be sprinkled on a soil long fertilized with democratic traditions and a democratic yield may justifiably be expected. In Asia, the very soil itself has to be created. Democracy cannot grow out of mass ignorance and disease. The basic stuff of any social form – physical survival and mental communication – must first be there. Only then does the possibility of modern democratic development arise. In Europe mistakes can be made without risking conclusive defeat. In Asia a few well-placed blunders can destroy democratic hopes for generations. An active and coherent policy in Asia is long overdue, yet we should not move until we know exactly what we want and are decided to stay with it to the end. There will be no quick victories in Asia—diplomatic, military, or economic.

2. Since the democratic spokesmen for Asia are ahead of their people, America must be completely realistic about the value of diplomatic agreements with them. It is not a question of distrusting them. Indeed, they are likely to be more circumspect about entering into pacts than Westerners, and at least as conscientious in carrying them out. There must, however, be a prudent realization that an Asian statesman's signature on a document represents at best the commitment of a literate minority and passive acceptance born of ignorance from the rest of the population.

There is certainly no evidence of broad popular support in Asia for a pro-Western orientation. Nehru's agreement to keep India in the British Commonwealth aroused little enthusiasm even among his educated followers. For the present, Nehru can make such a commitment with safety. His people are indulgent because he is still the gallant hero of their nationalist victory. And the manner of the British withdrawal from India has taken some of the curse off a continuing British connection to which even practical advantage might not otherwise have reconciled the Indians. Nehru's visit to the United States was a political triumph for him in India because he promised America nothing. America won esteem from the Indians because we liked Nehru anyway.

3. By the same token the United States must be even more scrupulous about military pacts. At present there is little interest in them among the democratic leaders of Asia. These men want friendly collaboration, not defensive alliances. It is the tyrants and weaklings who will offer their embraces. The strength of their desire for security guarantees will be in direct ratio to their reluctance to carry out domestic social reforms. And their ardor for social reforms is likely to decline as American arms arrive. We can safely assume that any regime seeking active American military support has already lost the support of its people and that our military intervention anywhere in Asia will raise the cry of imperialism.

4. America must learn to recognize the difference between a democratic force and a democratic facade. By giving aid to repressive regimes, we alienate ourselves from the people no matter how vigorous our protestations that we are acting in the name of freedom. The most generous program of economic aid can smooth the way for a Communist denouement if its benefits are not spread among the hungry. Indeed, the Communist success in China bears the stamp of American arms, American cotton, American food, American technical training, and even American education in democratic ideals that could never be translated into Chinese action. What America got for its trouble in China was Chiang Kai-Shek and his friends and relatives; what we lost was the people.

5. Anti-Communism is not enough. Nor is conventional "pro-democratic" propaganda enough. It is true that even comparatively well-informed Asians are extraordinarily ig-

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norant and misinformed about the role in world affairs of both the Soviet Union and the United States during the past ten or fifteen years. It is true that there is still a good deal of pre-war anti-fascist popular front romanticism about the Communists as fighters for peace and freedom, that there is still ignorance about the consequences of the new Russian imperialism to national self-determination, that there is still a strong admiration for the "miracle" of Soviet industrial development which overlooks the human cost. But this condition is only partly explained by the quantity of Communist propaganda, and can be only partly eradicated by more propaganda from us.

Since anti-imperialism, racial equality, and economic collectivism are the dominant passions in Asian nationalism, the attractions of Communism are great even for democratically-inclined nationalists. The Communist clichés about the West fit their past experience so well that they tend to suspect all new evidence.

But beyond this are the industrious local Communists who work among, and are, peasants, industrial workers, students, and intellectuals. They are more than "propagandists"; they are organizers of chaos and revolution. Insofar as the party line allows it, they can flourish on immediate grievances. When they operate openly as Communists, they can still fall back on the lingering reputation of the Soviet Union as the motherland of class struggle. The activity of devoted, disciplined, native agitators exploiting the glory of the Bolshevik revolution in a revolutionary atmosphere is something the Department of State will find it hard to emulate. America does not have self-sacrificing local followers in close contact with the masses and our revolutionary tradition is somewhat musty. Assuming, of course, that a democratic policy fitting the revolutionary mood of Asia is evolved, America can reach Asians with it most effectively through their own democratic organizations—labor unions, political movements, women's and students' organizations, etc. This can best be done by parallel groups in the United States that establish active relations with such organizations in Asia, not only for the purpose of propaganda but also to show them how voluntary organizations in a democracy can operate for the public welfare. Official propaganda can help, but it has limitations.

6. Finally, we cannot consider the fact of Asia's poverty as a threat to America's physical security only. It is also a challenge to our moral pretensions. The Westerner thinks of himself as a universalist committed to protecting the dignity of the least of men. He tries to act on this ethical concept by practical measures ranging from philanthropy to revolution. But, on the whole, he has acted only in the West.

THE Westerner who takes his moral values as well as his order blanks with him to Asia, and sees with his own eyes the bestial conditions under which millions of his fellow men live, must achieve some attitude toward it related to his moral system. If he simply accepts it or ignores it, he is hardly the man to save Asia for democracy.

Since most Americans have not seen Asia, its misery cannot be engraved on their consciences. As individuals we may be excused for helping others on the basis of tribalism. But the aid that we as a nation can give the world should be distributed with some relation to the extent and intensity of the need. As a nation founded on humane, universalist ethical concepts and engaged in an effort to save nothing less than the whole world, how can we justify concentration on Europe? Whatever sophisticated strategic considerations enter into the question of priorities in America's foreign policy, simple humanitarianism must also be involved. Otherwise we do violence to the moral code that supports our claim to superiority over the totalitarians. And we may also do violence to our cold-blooded strategy since a simple humanitarianism may, in the end, be the only intelligible way in which we can demonstrate the merit of democracy to illiterate people with whom the surest communication is, as Gandhi demonstrated, through the heart.

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THE BLUE PIANO OF ELSE LASKER-SCHUELER

"A Hebrew Poetess in the German Tongue"

HEINZ POLITZER

ON A cold winter's day at the end of 1944, as the war was drawing to its close, we buried Else Lasker-Schueler. Services were held in the mortuary of the Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem, under the merciless sun of Palestine, on a vitreous clear noonday, in view of the desert which descends in dunes to the Dead Sea.

The sextons busied themselves with a little bundle smaller than the body of a child. The last words were spoken by a friend of the dead woman who had feared her and cared for her, smiled and worried over her, like almost everyone who had befriended her here in Palestine. The portly rabbi with the face of an actor suffering because he had to play-act and because his sufferings were also play-acting, did something unheard of in view of the vast hatred that prevailed in Jewish Palestine for all things German: he recited a poem in German, a poem by Else Lasker-Schueler:

Ich weiss, dass ich bald sterben muss.
Es leuchten doch alle Bäume
Nach langersehntem Julikuss–

Fahl werden meine Träume–
Nie dichtete ich einen trübern Schluss
In den Büchern meiner Reime.

Eine Blume brichst du mir zum Gruss–
Ich liebte sie schon im Keime.
Doch ich weiss, dass ich bald sterben muss.

Mein Odem schwebt über Gottes Fluss–
Ich setze leise meinen Fuss
Auf dem Pfad zum ewigen Heime.

(I know that I must die soon.
Yet all the trees are radiant
After summer's long-awaited kiss–

My dreams grow gray–
Never have I written a sadder ending
In my books of rhymes.

You pluck a flower for me–
I loved it in the bud.
Yet I know that I must die soon.

My breath hovers over the river of God–
Softly I set my foot
On the path to my long home.)

But there was an inner rightness in reciting this German poem in Palestine instead of the Hebrew prayer for the dead, which should traditionally have been said. For this poetess had written Hebrew poetry in German.

ELSE LASKER-SCHUELER had been cast ashore in Palestine by the persecutions and she hated the everyday Palestine present. She had been to Palestine once before and fled back to Switzerland, where it took her several months to recover from the shock that the reality of her homeland had given

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THE interest of American readers of poetry has been piqued but not satisfied by the little they have known of Else Lasker-Schueler. To give us a fuller report of her life and art, we are fortunate now to have in this country someone as well qualified as HEINZ POLITZER. Else Lasker-Schueler is not only of Jewish importance; she also marks a significant movement in the history of German literature, and her poems will remain part of the treasure of all German-speaking people who love poetry. Mr. Politzer was born in Vienna in 1910 and emigrated to Palestine in 1938, where he knew Else Lasker-Schueler personally. In 1948 he came to this country and now teaches German at Bryn Mawr College. He has been a frequent contributor to COMMENTARY, where his essays constitute perhaps the most thoroughgoing effort yet made to assess the role of Jews in German literature and culture. His pen has also succeeded in illuminating such phenomena as American comic strips and the cartoons of Saul Steinberg. The translation of the present article is by Ralph Manheim.

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her. But then, in the thin, neutral air of Switzerland, she wrote her book *Hebräerland* (Land of the Hebrews), a terrifying muddle of grotesque errors and magnificent insights, an extravagant, incoherent, moody book marked by utter irresponsibility toward the actual facts of the reality which she had seen and fled.

She returned to Palestine in the midst of the Second World War; a broken old woman who looked like a solitary, exotic night bird, with enormous eyes in an ageless face. The whole of her seemed as if carved from a mandrake root. Her lips were bitter, but when they smiled they were innocent and lovely. She moved through the streets like a spook, speaking a weird jargon made up of German and what she called English or Hebrew, quarreling with everyone, especially her friends, scattering angry and sometimes profound insights from an inner abundance that still burst through the insane surface of her life. She loved everything that was innocent and did not contradict her: flowers and children and animals, the poor overworked asses in the streets of Jerusalem. In their presence she could suddenly stop still in her incessant flight, her face would compose itself, her speech would become clear and translucent, and she emanated a strange, wild, and oriental beauty.

She wrote at an early age: "I was born in Thebes [Egypt], even though I first saw the light in Elberfeld in the Rhineland." She was born in 1876, seven years before Franz Kafka, but she was prepared to bring suit if this date were mentioned in public. She was old and ugly, but she affected the vanity of a young and beautiful woman; indeed, she openly exaggerated her vanity, thus admitting that she was only playing and that she knew how poor and unattractive she was.

She intentionally bathed her career in obscurity and blurred her traces. Little is known of her earthly life, but even if we had more facts, they would tell us little. She lived beyond time and space, a vagrant and a gypsy, frequenting many times and countries, but nowhere at home, except in that mythical past where, as she said and believed, she had been born. She had no home, every room in which she lived became an intolerable prison for her; she hated her rooms, neglected them, and at length invariably fled from them.

She was never on time for an appointment, but always hours late or early, and what she liked best was not to turn up at all. But she knew that she could not bear to be alone and she was shrewd enough to appraise and exploit her mastery over people—the mastery of the extreme, unfettered neurotic over so-called normal people. And so she sent the friends she had kept waiting special-delivery postcards covered from top to bottom with barely legible signs that, when deciphered, turned out to be childish, manic little rhymes.

She had no present, she suffered from her time as she would have suffered from any time. She was ageless and almost sexless, and the "I" which appears so persistently and sometimes excessively in her poems is only a temporary mooring in space and time; she clings to it for a moment, but it gives her no identity.

It is well-nigh impossible to write the story of her life. Her poems do not show the development of a character, and in general they are without biographical data. But it is not necessary to understand Else Lasker-Schueler biographically, for seldom has so forceful a personality been as impersonal as she.

Her life and work place her in the last generation of German Jews, whose origins were, in a way, less of a problem for them than they had been for Heine and Boerne. There was no conflict between her Jewishness and the language she spoke, and she did not, like her contemporary Jakob Wassermann, look upon her "road as a German and as a Jew" as a Calvary. From this she was saved by her boundless spontaneity of expression. More than almost any other poet, she was voice and nothing but voice; with a candor bordering on sadism, she expressed what poured from the depths of a soul which she herself, as she said, often

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did not understand. If ever a poet has embodied in his work C. G. Jung's concept of the collective unconscious—the sum of the experience of our fathers that lies dormant in the mind of the individual—it was Else Lasker-Schueler. This experience, inherited with her blood, consisted in the wild and tender images of the Biblical world or rather, in memories of the pre-Biblical era of the Jews, which she came to identify with names and places that she found in Scripture. She dreamt Hebrew visions, but the only words she could clothe them in were German.

And it is the grotesque tragedy of Else Lasker-Schueler and of the best of her generation that they never learned to speak the language of their dreams and that the language that was the source of her songs sounded weird and unfamiliar in her ears when she first went to Palestine. In Germany she called herself "Prince Yussuf" and was proud to be a foreigner; when she went to her homeland she remained Else Lasker-Schueler, and a foreigner.

She knew of this foreignness and bore it with a dignity which gave her witchlike presence a ludicrous human dignity. In 1925, she wrote: "I composed the poems of my first book between the ages of 15 and 17. At that time I found my way back to my primal language, derived from the era of Saul, the royal wild Jew. Today I can still speak this language, which probably came to me in my dreams. Among others, my poem *'Weltflucht'* (Flight from the World) is written in this 'mystical Asiatic.'"

Here, first of all, is the poem as it was written in German:

Ich will in das Grenzenlose
Zu mir zurück,
Schon blüht die Herbstzeitlose—
Vielleicht ist es zu spät—zurück
Ob ich sterbe zwischen euch
Die ihr mich erstickt mit euch. ·
Fäden möchte ich um mich ziehen
Wirrwarr endend,
Verwirrend,
Zu entfliehen
Meinwärts.

(Into the boundless
Let me go back to myself,
The autumn crocus is flowering—
Perhaps it is too late—let me go back
Even though I die among you
Who smother me with your selves.
I would draw threads around me
To end confusion
And confuse,
To escape
Me-wards.)

And now the same poem in "mystical Asiatic":

Min salihi wali kinahu
Rahi hatiman
fi is bahi lahi fassun—
Min hagas assama anadir,
Wakan liachad abtal,
Latina almu lijádina binassre.
Wa min tab ihi
Anahu jatelahu
Wanu bilahum.
Assama ja saruh
fi es supi bila uni
El fidda alba hire
Wa wisuri—elbanaff!

This of course was a game, but a meaningful game. Amid the childish euphony of this wishful dream language, we note intimations of Hebrew roots ("liachad," "lijádina," etc.) and Hebrew endings. But this language sounds both more primitive and more beautiful than any idiom of historic growth.

It is an old dream of the poets to find a language in which feeling and vision can express themselves without subservience to the rules of linguistic logic. The creative imagination has long yearned to soar free, without regard for the social obligation to communicate; an understandable desire, though dangerous in its undisciplined manifestations.

Most poets have rejected this desire as a sin of youth. But we do know that the hieratic German, Stefan George, invented such a language of his own, in which the

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Romance element was predominant*—as was the Hebraic in Else Lasker-Schueler's "mystical Asiatic."

THE country of which the Rhinelander Stefan George dreamed was strangely compounded of Dante's Italy and Mallarmé's Parnasse. But the compulsive, infantile repetition of Gertrude Stein and the cryptically lulling and compelling measures of *Finnegans Wake* embody a similar longing for a language that is autonomous and free from communication, that carries its own fulfillment. And in Gertrude Stein, as well as in the late Joyce, we clearly discern the tendency to return by way of a magical, unintelligible idiom into the magical labyrinth of the poet's own childhood.

But Else Lasker-Schueler did not go back to her childhood or past, but to the myth, the prehistoric past. She who in her life was so entirely individualistic and so filled with herself that, with lucid self-knowledge, she could entitle her last play *Ich und Ich,* was, in the best of her poems, absolutely anonymous. She saw the patriarchs: Jacob, the "buffalo of his flock," Abraham and Isaac and the sacrifice of Isaac, the women of the Old Testament, Esther, "slender as a palm tree," or Ruth:

Am Brunnen meiner Heimat
Steht ein Engel,
Der singt das Lied meiner Liebe,
Der singt das Lied Ruths.

(At the well of my native place
Stands an angel,
He sings the song of my love,
He sings the song of Ruth.)

And in her late years, in her last poems, she saw Jerusalem ("Out of his spine God built Palestine; out of a single bone, Jerusalem"), and she captured the moonlight landscape of the hills of Judea in visions upon which she was able to set the stamp of authenticity not because, but although, she lived among them. There is in her verses an inhuman, primeval tone, a sobriety of image that combines with the drunken, melodic intertwining of her rhymes to produce an effect that is unique. Her visions have the bareness of Biblical imagery, while her melodies carry the lyric richness of Oriental poetry.

SHE was, in her self-willed way, as un-German as Franz Kafka. And like him, she does not fit into the tradition of German Jewish literature, let alone of German literature proper. Asia is in her and the myth of Asia, as it was also in Kafka and his work. She wrote the main body of her work during the rise and fall of German Expressionism.

From Expressionism she took certain mannerisms, some of them unfortunate, but essentially her work is primordial, alien to Europe and Germany. She has had no disciples except for the German Jewish poetess Nelly Sachs, who more than a generation later wrote of her experience of Hitler's pogroms and the concentration camps in verses which echo the style of Else Lasker-Schueler but lack her depth.* And there is a profound irony in the circumstance that figures like Franz Kafka and Else Lasker-Schueler, in whom for the first time German Jewish writing achieved originality and legitimacy, belonged essentially to a realm outside German culture.

For this reason the history of German Jewish literature is, properly speaking, a history of disassimilation. There was Richard Beer-Hofmann, who cast his Biblical dramas and his feelings for the blood bond between the generations in Goethean verses (*Miriams Schlaflied*). There was Karl Wolfskehl, disciple, herald, and in certain critical respects also preceptor of Stefan George, whom the persecutions of 1933, of which he had long had a foreboding, threw back on a Judaism whose substance is the dialogue of

Resounded over the hills and islands
As sweet and heart-kindling as the chorus of Attica:
CO BESOSO PASOJE PTOROS
CO ES ON HAMA PASOJE BOAÑ. (*"Ursprünge"* in *Der Siebente Ring,* 1907.)

*Nelly Sachs: *Sternverdunkelung,* Gedichte, Bermann-Fischer Verlag, Amsterdam, 1949.

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man with God.* There was Rudolph Borchardt,† the lie of whose existence, the lie that he was a German, was at the heart of his creative impulse—and also of the grotesque doom that befell him when the Nazis deported him, the German officer, the self-styled German national poet. There was Alfred Mombert, who built himself a world-removed dream realm of art and myth, and Karl Kraus who purified the German language until in his hands it became a lifeless, sterile organism, and then revived it with his anger, his prophetic Jewish anger.

Richard Beer-Hofmann attempted to advance the process of disassimilation by combining a pseudo-Biblical Judaism with a pseudo-classical Germanism; Karl Kraus, an Austrian Nietzschean, vaingloriously placed himself outside both the Jewish and the German frame, and searched the *past* for succor in a conflict that was *present* within him. For the others, disassimilation, the eruption of the Jewish through the German, came as a negative reaction to the historical shock of 1933. All of them were, in many masks, epigones of the German tradition, and since they were late epigones, they knew their dilemma and sought their primal source in dreams.

Amid all her confusion, Else Lasker-Schueler experienced this process of disassimilation organically, in her own skin, and bore witness to it in her best poems. For her the German language was little more than a vehicle—and sometimes an inadequate one. Consequently she was without masters and without emulators, indefinable, a stumbling block for literary history.

ESSENTIALLY, however, the problem of the Jews in German writing should not be viewed historically, but phenomenologically. Not the German, not even the German-Jewish context is decisive, but solely to what extent these various writers left Germanism behind them, in what direction they left it, and with how much honesty. And more is involved than the process of "homegathering" demanded by Bialik. It is not only a question of gathering these broken spikes of grain and storing them in the granary of the Jewish tradition. For, from a historical point of view, this Jewish tradition is itself heterogeneous and broken, contradictory and paradoxical. The history of the Jews in almost two centuries of German literature is a striving of individuals for self-portrayal and self-realization, a tragic striving, whose aim is to be sought in the moral as well as the aesthetic sphere.

The moral, to be sure, inevitably determined the aesthetic. The closer these poets came to themselves, i.e., not only the more Jewish they became, but the more marked the existential conflict between their Jewishness and their Germanness became, the deeper their search for individual authenticity, the better poems they wrote.

So long as the German Jews were struggling for the possession of their language, they remained its debtors. The linguistic jokes and original locutions with which the generation of Heine and Boerne and the generations afterwards amused themselves are, as is so often the case with jokes, merely confessions of a deep-seated insecurity. Only when the German Jews began to attach more importance to *what* they said than to *how* they said it, only when they began to rise above the language, and sovereignly master it, i.e., only when they began to deal in German with their own un-German, necessarily un-German themes, and above all with their German-Jewish conflict, did they give the language a new face, new possibilities of expression and a strange new beauty, which could already be surmised in the later Jewish poems of Heine.

Ever since Goethe's *Westoestlicher Diwan*, German poets had striven to assimilate oriental sounds and oriental metaphors to German poetry. Platen's *Ghaselen* and Rueckert's *Makamen* were attempts also to reproduce the specific verse forms of the East. But it was Else Lasker-Schueler who first

*1933. A Poem Sequence. German, with English translation by Carol North Valhope and Ernest Morwitz. Schocken Books, 1947.

†See "Rudolf Borchardt: Poet of Assimilation," by Heinz Politzer, COMMENTARY, January 1950.

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effected that complete fusion of West and East with which Goethe had autobiographically played. It was only when the German language had become incidental to the Jewish poet, when it had become natural and almost a matter of indifference to him, that he was able to make a significant addition to it. Like many great cultural works, the significant achievement of German Jewish literature was made unintentionally, and as though unconsciously. The price of this achievement was, to be sure, estrangement, estrangement from German as well as Jewish culture.

Nowhere in the work of Else Lasker-Schueler is this estrangement so perceptible as in her play *Die Wupper,* in which she attempts to depict the people and landscape of her childhood. It is a thoroughly Expressionistic play, a phantasmagoria full of frantic eloquence and incoherent visions. Its structure was disrupted by the same utter lack of responsibility toward reality that drove Lasker-Schueler aimlessly through her own life. Her contempt for psychology, her self-obsession, which allowed her fellowman to be no more than the thankful and passive receiver of the beauty which she bestowed upon him, deprived her "Wuppers" of all plasticity and verisimilitude. Although they bear German names, these figures do not belong to the German landscape. They are nothing but the un-German "I" of the poetess divided up among puppets.

In Berlin she became habituated to the heterogeneous society that made its home in the cafés, particularly the one called Romanische Café. She led the life of the true bohemian, who suffers from his uprootedness but draws creative strength from this very suffering. "Of sourse, we all look on the café as the devil. But without this devil, there's nothing at all."

It was in Berlin that she met Oskar Goldberg, who in his *Wirklichkeit der Hebräer* (Reality of the Hebrews) had elucidated the myth content of the Old Testament and fitted it into the religious history of the Orient as a whole. (Though Goldberg has exerted a profound influence upon the Jewish religious scholarship of our time, though his ideas and discoveries play, directly or indirectly, a prominent part in the Biblical novels of Thomas Mann, his work has today been well-nigh forgotten.)

Else Lasker-Schueler boasted of having read nothing since her school days, and there is no doubt that at least in her later years she was utterly indifferent to the work of other writers. She needed no books. She took from people what was useful to her, and she learned to understand the work through her contact with the man who had created it. For her, present and past were totally blurred. She judged and condemned Goethe as though he had just been walking down the street with her, and sometimes she honored her contemporaries with words that carried the weight of posthumous fame. Her judgments always had reference to herself and were based solely on the benefit that she and her poetry might draw from the person she was judging. Her judgments were always mad. But since madness nearly always weaves its fabric around a core of authentic experience, Else Lasker-Schueler's wildest opinion often carried the thorn of an apt insight.

Thus it is unlikely that she had ever read *Die Wirklichkeit der Hebräer.* But she understood that here, in the midst of Western civilization, the myth of the Old Testament had been freshly unearthed, and that the stubborn density, the wildness and beauty of this primeval world, bore a kinship to the dreams that she herself harbored. Oskar Goldberg, whose name she never mentioned, was more closely akin to her than any of the writers to whom she dedicated poems. And while the Hebrew literature of her time sang in mournful tones of the exile and persecution of her people, as in Bialik, or yearned for the gods of Greece and a beauty less laden with suffering, as in Tschernichowsky, or devoted a Gogolesque humor to the little people of Galicia and the great faith that kept them alive, as in S. J. Agnon—Else Lasker-Schueler, the German, the *"Zivilisationsliteratin"* (Thomas Mann), penetrated

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deep into prehistory and there gathered a sense of her people that was more cruel, more authentic, and at the same time more visionary than the ephemeral cliché which awakening Jewish nationalism was just beginning to create.

Der Fels wird morsch
Dem ich entspringe
Und meine Gotteslieder singe . . . .
Jäh stürz ich vom Weg
Und riesele ganz in mir
Fernab, allein über Klagegestein
Dem Meer zu.

Hab mich so abgeströmt
Von meines Blutes
Mostvergorenheit.
Und immer, immer noch der Widerhall
In mir,
Wenn schauerlich gen Ost
Das morsche Felsgebein,
Mein Volk,
Zu Gott schreit.

(The rock crumbles
From which I spring
Singing my songs to the Lord. . . .
Steep from the path I fall
And all within me I flow
Down, slowly down, alone over rocks of lamentation,
To the sea.

I have poured myself so far
From the seething
New wine of my blood.
And still, still the echo always
Within me,
When terribly eastward
The crumbling bones of rock,
My people,
Cry out to God.)

ELSE LASKER-SCHUELER loved much, easily, unselectively, and always unhappily. Nearly every one of her poems bears a dedication, and nearly every dedication is to a man she loved. In her love poems she hid her face behind masks, and when she spoke of herself, it was a self in the mask of a man, just as she sometimes appeared on the platform in trousers, to recite her verses. After "Yussuf, Prince of Thebes," came "Malik"—Hebrew: *melech*—another royal mask, but there was also the girl, "Tino of Bagdad." She also conferred the title of king or cardinal upon others, and fell in love with the phantasms that she herself had conjured up. She loved Peter Hille, a German Tolstoyan and mediocre muddlehead, whom she looked on quite simply as a saint ("To the great prophet St. Peter Hille, in veneration"), and Herwarth Walden who in his magazine *Der Sturm* carried German Expressionism to the extreme ("I should have become a clown, Herwarth, if that wouldn't have been an insult to you"), and the "dear half-brother," the "blue, blue knight," Franz Marc, who, with his "Tower of Blue Horses," had helped to free German painting from the mists of impressionism, and then had fallen in the First World War. All this, it is certain, was no more than a charming, lively game, but on each occasion she thought she was bleeding to death, and then she wrote poems like *"Der alte Tibetteppich"* (The Old Tibetan Carpet), in which love and rhetoric were woven into an artificial fabric that had however something of the intensity and rich imagery of the *Song of Songs*. And even her last work includes love poems full of girlish reticence and hesitant restrained passion.

A Jewish trait spoke in Else Lasker-Schueler insofar as love ceased to be a game with her only when she turned to her mother or her child. As soon as she saw herself situated in the chain of the generations, the feeling she otherwise squandered so heedlessly became solemn earnest. In her songs of mourning for her lost mother and her son who died while still a boy, she revealed herself unmasked, a poor lonely woman, shivering in the cold wind.

Immer wieder wirst du mir
Im scheidenden Jahr sterben, mein Kind,

Wenn das Laub zerfliesst
Und die Zweige schmal werden . . . .

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Die Liebe zu dir ist das Bildnis
Das man sich von Gott machen darf . . .

Nie ahnte ich den Tod—
Spüren um dich, mein Kind—

Und ich liebe des Zimmers Wände,
Die ich bemale mit deinem Knabenantlitz.

Die Sterne, die in diesem Monat
So viele sprühend ins Leben fallen,
Tropfen schwer auf mein Herz.

(Always in the parting year
You will die to me, my child,

When the leaves scatter
And the branches grow thin . . .

My love for you is the image
Which it is given us to form of God . . .

I never thought to feel death
For your sake, my child—

And I love the walls of the room
That I paint with your boyish face.

So many stars in this month
Fall showering into life,
Drop heavy on my heart.)

It is characteristic of the great woman poets of all ages and languages, that they dare, almost innocently, to express what men conceal behind the form of their poems. Where a man turns his passion into a metaphor or a riddle, a woman—be she Louise Labé of Lyon or Elizabeth Barrett Browning—frankly gives herself in her poetry. Similarly, Else Lasker-Schueler was without shame in her lyrical confessions of love, and doubly so, because she performed her love before the random, promiscuous audience of the Berlin literary cafés, and because it was from behind a mask, and often a male mask, that she loved. Only when pain came to her, not in the form of longing or disillusionment, but as death, the death of one she loved, only when her grief forbade her to be anyone but herself, no longer a prince or a king, but a suffering, aging woman, motherless and bereft of her child, only when she ceased to play charming games of make-believe amid the *demi-monde* of the cafés, does her poetry become human and take on human dignity. Not in yearning or fulfillment, but in grief over the life that had given her life and the life that owed its life to her, was she, the Jewess, entirely herself, and a great creative poet.

Her hunger for life was insatiable and she let no occasion pass on which to appease it. In her eyes there was always hunger and her fingers, which in old age resembled the talons of a hawk, were forever twitching. She hated all those who were satiated, those who possessed and defended their possessions. She found friends enough who admired what was extraordinary in her and her work. It is astonishing how much help was offered her in a Palestine menaced by war and trembling with inner unrest, though she made no secret of her hostility, though she openly spoke and wrote German, the language of the murderer. But she rejected, or wasted, all the help that was offered her with a contempt that was an admission of her own fear of life. She lived in a bare hovel, shivering and sleepless.

She took refuge in dreams of angels who resembled heavenly gardeners, in dreams of her mother and child, or in madness. But she still possessed sufficient sense of reality to know that her madness was half escape and half pretense. Often she allowed false counselors to edit her finest, most self-willed lines into commonplaces. And as though she knew that she herself was often not entirely serious about her poetry, that her poetry was not adequate to the visions which still poured in upon her, she complemented her songs with drawings.

The poet who strives to complete his word images by drawings of what he has seen is no rarity. Half of Blake's energy and enthusiasm went into his graphic representation of the supernatural. Goethe amused himself with painfully precise representations of his classicistic environment, in which he imprinted the orderliness of his genius upon landscape and architecture alike. And among our contemporaries, Jean Cocteau

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reproduced in drawings his elegant and terrifying literary associations until he found in the movies a more adequate vehicle for his unconscious.

Else Lasker-Schueler's mastery of drawing was astonishingly meager. She is related to William Blake both by this deficiency and the type of her visions. She too metamorphosed the material of her everyday experience into giants, angels, and priests. Greek monks whom she saw in the squares of Jerusalem grew to the stature of young Greek heroes, and around the picturesque costumes of the Arabs she wove the twilight and tinsel of the *Arabian Nights*.

The color of these pastel sketches is a dreamy, musically modulated silver-gray, while her poems are full of sudden transitions and harsh contrasts attenuated by melody. In her drawings she saw things of which she did not speak in her poems: the settlers who were building Palestine, to whom here and there she gave legendary pathos. And persistently, Jerusalem rises in her drawings, the festive and serene capital of her lifelong yearning, the city which was never farther removed from her than when she lived there.

But even here, in these drawings, the poetess's "I" keeps reappearing. She developed a certain graphic formula, a hieroglyph, for her self-portrait. This hieroglyph, which strangely reminds one of the little figures Franz Kafka scribbled in the margins of his manuscripts, shows how she saw herself: a spook haunted by spooks, conscious of her weakness, but also conscious of the uniqueness and force of her personality, a fugitive from no-man's-land to no-man's-land, an old Jewess and a fairy prince, a creature of dreams and lies and truthfulness, inextricably mingled.

THE central problem of Jewish writing in our time is that of truthfulness. Exposed to foreign influences, in rivalry with foreign writers, striving to outdo them and yet to be himself, the Jewish writer can be judged only by the authenticity with which he represents the situation of the Jew. In all other present-day literatures, the lie is no more than an illegitimate child of the imagination: the critic exposes it, smilingly. The Jew, however, who has always been a symbol to the Western world, is in process of becoming a new mythical figure, the last perhaps, and assuredly one of the profoundest which the Western imagination is capable of creating, the myth of the modern man, homeless but at home in his homelessness. Only by complete self-identification, by complete honesty, can the Jewish writer avoid disappointing the hopes which the perceptive reader, himself a sufferer from the crisis of our times, places in him. If the Israeli is to emerge as a new variety of the species Jew, he will have to legitimize his appearance in a Palestinian literature that, as far as we can see, does not yet exist. Only then will it be possible to enter in any discussion of the contribution Palestinian civilization is making to the context of Jewish literature the world over.

Else Lasker-Schueler, however, was a Hebrew poetess in the German tongue. This paradox embodies her tragedy and the imperfection of that tragedy. Her poems are dominated by the madness of the enthusiast, the seer, the prophetess, which served her contact with the profane world. But she was wise enough to know that she was mad, and shrewd enough to play with the abyss separating her from reality, to use it in her search for the "I" that she never discovered, because she never found the Other, who would have disclosed her identity. And so her passion was artificial and her hatred was a defense mechanism, a mimicry, and not organic. But she was authentic in her mythical visions, and since she was authentic there, the contradiction between Hebraic vision and German word annulled itself in them. She was authentic in her lament for mother and child, and authentic in those songs in which she saw herself as a fugitive, as the singer of the old mysterious, magical song, who was persecuted because the song was no longer understood.

Ich habe zu Hause ein blaues Klavier

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Und kenne doch keine Note.

Es steht im Dunkel der Kellertür,
Seitdem die Welt verrohte.

Es spielen Sternenhände vier
–Die Mondfrau sang im Boote–
Nun tanzen Ratten im Geklirr.

Zerbrochen ist die Klaviatür . . .
Ich beweine die blaue Tote.

Ach, liebe Engel, öffnet mir
–Ich ass vom bittern Brote–
Mir lebend schon die Himmelstür–
Auch wider dem Verbote.

(I have a blue piano at home,
Yet I don't know a single note.

It stands in the dark by the cellar door,
Since the coarsening of the world.

Four starry hands are playing
–The moon woman sang in the bark–
Now rats are dancing to the din.

Broken is the keyboard . . .
I weep for the blue dead.
Ah, dear angels, open
–I have eaten the bitter bread–
Heaven's gate to me while I live–
Forbidden though it is.)

This is the plaint of Orpheus, the plaint for the song that has been lost in an unmusical, songless, mute age. Yeats in his old age took up this plaint, and Rainer Maria Rilke was filled with it. Else Lasker-Schueler enriched it with the realization that song had become estranged, removed even from herself. "... Yet I don't know a single note . . . ," an insight which embraces much of the forlornness and metaphysical irony of Franz Kafka. We shall make no mistake if we designate as Jewish, if not Hebrew, this specific contribution of Else Lasker-Schueler to the self-portrait of the poet in our time.

She was seldom so authentic and wise as in this poem. When she was honest, her wisdom was that of a child, emerging suddenly, unexpectedly, in strange forms. At such times her love was also the love of a child, recognizing no limit or barrier, an endless yearning for tenderness and requited trust. The best among the poems of Else Lasker-Schueler will endure.

BREAD GATHERING

RALPH GORDON

The house seems large and empty, clean and quiet,
Grandfather has a candle, a feather brush,
Some broken bread; he walks about to lay it

In this room and that; we follow, through the hush
Of the orderly house. Now he begins to pray,
Pausing before each bread-crust, and with a swish

Of his goose-feathers sweeping it away
Into a cloth he carries; one by one
The lumps are taken. Looking as who should say:

Find me some bread now! grandfather has done
His cloth into knots, given the feathers a turn,
Too, with some string; and quickly, as if to shun

Contamination, takes out his bundle to burn:
Smoke curls about the cloth, and the flames cling and yearn.

RALPH GORDON is the author of two volumes on the technique of poetry. His poem "The Rabbi" was published in the December 1949 COMMENTARY.

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MONTREAL: THE BONDS OF COMMUNITY

The Town Within the City

BETTY SIGLER

MONTREAL is Canada's largest city: but to be a Jew there is to live in a small town. Since the 1880's there has been some Montreal neighborhood where one could ring hundreds of doorbells without finding a non-Jew. Jewish children there play in the streets below, buy their penny candy and "polly seeds" in nearby stores with the inevitable cat asleep in the window, and go to the same schools a few minutes' walk away. On warm evenings they sit on the winding outside staircases so common wherever French Canadian builders have been at work, and they gossip about the same boys and girls and bosses and teachers.

A Montreal Jew over forty years of age can place the family of a new acquaintance in the course of a handshake. A new face starts him thinking: "Haven't I met you before?"—and he tries to remember at what meeting, whose wedding, or what summer hotel. If indeed the two have never seen each other until that hour, they will hardly fail to discover a mutual friend or share a few distant cousins. A Jew who has run a cloak-and-suit business for ten years can make a fairly accurate guess at the income and even at the marital happiness of a Jewish colleague. He may take ten dollars off the price of a suit for one man, and pass another by on the street, all because he knew their grandfathers.

AS ONE looks down from the top of Mount Royal—"The Mountain" to Montrealers, but a mere bump in the flat St. Lawrence Plain from the air—the city spread beneath is an attractive sight. Except for the downtown business district, trees push up everywhere between the buildings, rarely more than twelve stories high. Each college, church, and convent below is set off by wide expanses of green, and only as the eye travels down toward the docks do the buildings begin to crowd together, the green appearing again only on the other side of the river.

Houses, stores, factories, then acres of park, and, on the outskirts of town, foundries and chemical works stretch out toward the flat eastern tip of the island. Rows of two- and three-story houses, all alike from a distance, reach northward to blocks of new factories which, in turn, give way to country villages before the Island of Montreal meets Back River. On the west, the pattern of residential districts (more attractive here), factories, and country towns extending down to the river is repeated.

Montreal contains almost as many foreign nationalities as there are in Manhattan, but in Montreal each group remains in large measure "an island entire unto itself." Those of British descent, who set business and social standards throughout Canada, are themselves a minority in Quebec Province, where French Canadians are edging them out of towns which had only a handful of French-speaking citizens two generations ago. The French tend to resent the traditional British ascendancy in industry and business, and the two cultures have come together little except to conflict, making of Montreal a dwelling place rather than a melting pot for its Jews. Montreal Jews are a community with a life of its own, Old Country *shtetl* in tradition, but assimilating toward American city ways. In size it numbers about eighty thousand.

OUR readers tell us that previous COMMENTARY articles on Jewish communities—New Haven, Richmond, "Spruceton," and an unnamed town in Maine—have given them valuable insights into the unfolding process of American Jewish life, even when they have quarreled with this or that interpretation of the writer. Here is a picture of the Jewish community of Montreal, as seen by BETTY SIGLER, who was born and grew up there. Miss Sigler is a graduate of McGill University, attended the graduate school of journalism at Columbia, and has since worked as a reporter for two newspapers in upstate New York: the Ogdensburg *Journal* and the Potsdam *Courier and Freeman*. This article is her first magazine publication.

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Of these the large majority came to Canada sixty years ago or less from Central and Eastern Europe. There is a small minority, Sephardic or German in origin, from the earlier immigration; and about a tenth were DP's.

Although the Jews of Montreal do not live in any walled enclosure, there is much in their life reminiscent of the ghetto. The folkways of the immigrants, for whom Yiddish was the only expressive language and *Yiddishkeit* the whole sum of existence, are now giving way to swing music and Freud and Marx, to mention a few of the more vigorous cultural forces, but the tendency to a close and inbred community life remains. Even those who have prospered enough to go to Miami in the winter—when Montreal's temperature can fall to twenty below, and on "mild" days one walks ankle-deep in slush —never really leave home. When an American Jew makes good, he may want to get into places that have scarcely taken down the "restricted" sign. A Montrealer wants his Southern sun and sea breezes where there are plenty of *haimishe menshen.* "Miami is like Geneva," a well-heeled business man on a southbound train remarked, "but Miami Beach—that's where my wife and I always go —Miami Beach is like Tel Aviv."

The desire to be together, the delight in finding a *landsman* on the fashionable trek South or elsewhere away from home, is an essential part of the community consciousness of the Montreal Jew. For all its roots in memories of the ghetto, because it has developed in a New World metropolis, the intimacy it creates cannot quite be that of the European *shtetl;* neither, however, is it that stiff, cold solidarity which comes when Jews have sought to impose on themselves the values and restraints, as they see them, of Anglo-Saxondom. Few Montreal Jews want to imitate the *goyim,* who are, in their eyes, a strange and heartless lot. "You know, they feel just as bad as we do when their children get sick," I have heard a Jewish woman say in amazement, leading up to a story about a worried mother next door. This attitude reflects the pride and sense of superiority of a group adapted to remaining apart in the midst of the distinctive social forces at work in Montreal.

THE public schools are one such force. Jews have to pay school taxes on their real estate to the Protestant Board of School Commissioners, and while hundreds of them have learned their English literature and French and mathematics and Latin without hearing a teacher utter a syllable against the Jews, they are educated in Montreal as a matter of indulgence, not as a matter of right, and they have at times been grouped into separate Jewish classes.

When Canada became a nation in 1867, the British promised the French Canadians state support for their Catholic schools. English-language schools taught only Protestants in those days, and Protestant they have remained, although the original tiny group of Jewish pupils has multiplied many times over since Confederation. Public schools staffed largely by priests and nuns get the Catholic taxes, and assessments paid by other denominations go to the Protestant schools. Every citizen of Quebec is either a Catholic or a Protestant for educational purposes. Jews, since they are not Catholics, count as Protestants.

It took a world war to get Jewish teachers into the public schools of Montreal. There was a shortage in 1915, and for the first time, the Protestant Board engaged Jews to teach in certain schools where there were hardly any non-Jews among the pupils. After 1940 there was another shortage, but between the wars many an earnest young normal school graduate and many a girl with university degrees presented her qualifications to the superintendent of the School Board in vain.

One teacher with fifteen years' experience once wanted to demonstrate her highly successful method of teaching French to young children in one of the city's model schools, and she took her request to the superintendent. That worthy gentleman was shocked. "How would it sound," he asked, "to have the children in that district stand up and say 'Good morning, Miss Rosenberg'?"

Most of the private schools that are not run by the Catholic Church have a strongly Protestant program, even for their day pupils, and many of the latter schools have some church endowment. The city's one progressive school is not a noteworthy employment field for Jewish teachers although many psychology-conscious Jewish parents make an effort beyond their means to send their children there.

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No Jewish man has found it worth while to make teaching in Montreal his career, and no Jew has ever been a school principal or supervisor. A Jew has about as much chance of getting on the Montreal School Board in the foreseeable future as he would have of becoming president of New York's Metropolitan Club. "The Jewish population may rest assured," a member of the Board once said when the Jews asked to name one commissioner, an alderman whom the whole city respected and liked, "that the Protestant rate-payers will never consent to hand over to Jewish administration and control the splendid educational system and equipment built upon the sacrifices of half a century." That bold expression of intolerance was made some years ago, but the spirit behind it has changed as little as the crumbling rock below the lookout on Mount Royal.

Two years ago, in Outremont, a municipality to the north of Mount Royal, most of whose non-Catholics are Jews, the Protestant schools claimed that they were not getting enough money from the Provincial Government. The Quebec legislature, ruled by a strong French Canadian majority, was not too concerned with the problems of the English-language schools in any case, and it cared even less, it would seem, about the education of Montreal's Jewish children. Meeting no response to the demands for more money, the board said that it did not have sufficient funds to continue educating the Jewish youngsters. For a time the situation was tense, and rumors circulated that the Jewish children would have to leave the schools. According to many Jewish parents, more than one teacher was provoked by the controversy into revealing hidden anti-Semitism. The financial problem is settled now, for the next ten years, but the pupils are still in separate classes, or were a year ago.

This tax dispute did more, perhaps, than any single event since Hitler's accession to power to stimulate interest in separate Jewish day schools. Forty years ago, when almost all the adult Jews had been immigrants, there was not one such school in Montreal except yeshivas for boys preparing for the rabbinate. Today there are the Folk Schule, the Talmud Torahs, and the Peretz Schule, each of which has an extension department giving afternoon and evening courses in its main building and in an uptown branch. One synagogue school takes day pupils through the seventh grade, the end of elementary school in Montreal, and plans additional classes. Another takes children through the third grade, while still another has only kindergarten and first grade. Both of the latter institutions plan expansion of their day teaching program.

Montreal has eight thousand Jewish school children, of whom eighteen per cent, fourteen hundred, get all their education in parochial schools, where they spend three hours a day mastering the regular public school curriculum and two hours on Jewish subjects. About a third attend yeshivas, orthodox institutions where the emphasis is on religion and where Hebrew is taught, but no Yiddish. Another third are Talmud Torah pupils, studying in Hebrew national schools where Hebrew is taught to the youngest pupils, who also learn some Yiddish beginning in grade three. The remainder are at the Folk Schule, the secularistic national Jewish school, where Yiddish and Hebrew have equal importance in the study of language and literature. In all three types of schools, Bible study is of basic importance. The Talmud Torah and the Folk Schule emphasize Zionism rather than the religious spirit that is behind the yeshiva teaching.

Half the eight thousand youngsters are included in the parochial schools' afternoon and evening programs. The Talmud Torah and the yeshivas teach twenty-two hundred; the Folk Schule and Peretz Schule, the latter having a similar program but a rather stronger socialist philosophy, teach fifteen hundred; and the Morris Winchevsky and Arbeiter Ring schools take care of the other three hundred.

Parents give their children this extensive Jewish education because they want them to understand their own background in a city that is perhaps more ancestor-conscious than such a cosmopolitan community would be in the United States. Many people are proud of the fact that they can send their youngsters to a private school; others say that they are simply very, very tired of having their offspring come home from the public schools singing "Yes Jesus Loves Me."

On the other hand, the Jewish boy or girl who does well in high school has

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an excellent chance of getting into a private college in Montreal. Anyone who makes the required mark in the matriculation examinations, and can pay the fees, can go to McGill University, where the only quotas appear to be in medicine and dentistry.

Essentially British and Protestant in spirit, McGill is nevertheless of peculiar importance as a bond in Jewish community solidarity. In the office of almost every Jewish doctor and lawyer in the city hang two diplomas from McGill. If two professional men are of the same age, they are likely to have played pool together in the McGill Union in the balmy days when only the dullest of the dull "flunked out" and Professor Stephen Leacock, Canada's foremost modern humorist, used to take to the woods and go fishing instead of meeting his Saturday economics classes. Today most Jewish undergraduates still live at home, as they did a generation ago, and the impact of the new people and new ideas they meet on the campus is cushioned by the familiar atmosphere to which they return each night. The university does not shape or change them as it might if they had moved away physically from the pressures and prejudices of home.

Nevertheless it is as a student that a Jewish Montrealer can get furthest outside the spiritual ghetto barrier of his city—on the athletic teams, on the McGill *Daily*, on the literary magazine, and in the clubs where the world's philosophical, sociological, psychological, and political problems are attacked. In these groups, faith and background do not matter; anybody who wants to make a blueprint for the ideal state or argue about the Atlantic Pact is welcome; if discrimination is mentioned over coffee at Ben's or beer at André's, it is only another subject to keep the talk going.

Thirty years ago Jewish students rarely came to campus social gatherings, except at the Maccabean Circle. Today they take part in all student festivities from Athletics Night (50¢ stag; $1 a couple) to the Junior Prom ($10). "Mac. Circle" gave way not long ago to the Hillel Foundation, with a full-time rabbi and a handsomely furnished house of its own instead of an honorary adviser and the use of the Union clubroom. "The Maccabean Circle was a way to spend an evening and have some discussion of Jewish subjects," one middle-aged graduate said, contrasting it with Hillel, "but none of us ever thought that Canada wasn't our home, and we didn't dance any horas in college buildings."

Neither do Hillel members, for that matter, although the Zionist group provides the dynamic behind the organization. Its members form a nucleus around which larger groups gather to hear visiting speakers, and they insure an attendance at Hebrew and other classes given by the rabbi. It is the young Zionists, for the most part, while they are still in Canada and at the university, who see that there is someone at the piano and enough people in the kitchen to insure the success of the Oneg Shabbat and other social gatherings.

In American cities there are Zionists, non-Zionists, and anti-Zionists: in Montreal there are only active and passive Zionists. Even the Communists collect money for Jewish national causes. The majority of Jews, who consider Canada their homeland and not Israel, have not in peacetime, in this writer's experience, been known to sing "The Maple Leaf Forever" or "O Canada" with anything like the enthusiasm of even a moderate Zionist giving voice to "Hatikva" or the Palmach battle hymn. It is a rare Montreal Jew who has assimilated too far to take at least a casual interest in Zionist activity.

Two years ago the Canadian Zionist Organization wanted to send one million dollars to Israel at once, to meet an emergency dollar shortage there. Although not a dollar had been collected and the campaign was still in the planning stage, a chartered bank offered to advance the money. So fast did the returns pour in, however, that the advance was unnecessary.

Both sexes, all ages, and every shade of political and religious belief are found among Montreal Zionists. Every synagogue except the Temple has at least one Hadassah chapter, and the members are as quick with fund-raising ideas as they are to notice each other's New York outfits. The president of one chapter collected more than a thousand dollars at a single meeting from women who did the laundry and mending before they left their houses, and next day her mail box was stuffed with checks from those who could not attend. Young Judea alone has several hundred members: Hashomer Hatzair and other more radical groups have at

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least as many more. From white-bearded *rabbonim* to men who in their radical youth told bawdy Yiddish jokes and made a feast day of Yom Kippur, all are good Zionists.

B'NAI B'RITH, once simply a Jewish lodge, has blossomed into a cradle-to-the-grave organization. It brought Hillel to McGill in 1944. Six years ago it opened the first Aleph Zadik Aleph chapter in Montreal, and now the boys' fraternity has members in every high school. The parent group is always on the watch for leaders who will include in the programs, mainly social, some instruction in Jewish history and traditions, so that it will not be sponsoring something that merely gives the boys a Jewish milieu in which to imitate the Gentiles. B'nai B'rith has a ladies' auxiliary, too, and even has clubs for high school girls and children in the elementary grades.

Much of the social life of those who talk Yiddish centers in the *landsmanshaften*, associations of people from the same parts of Europe. They still think sports are *naarish*, and most jokes that roll night club patrons in the aisles would not move a muscle of these faces which can be so expressive. At the get-togethers of the Bessarabisher Verband, however, they can have bazaars and concerts to raise money—for Europe, once, and now for Israel—and enjoy themselves too. Smaller *verbaende* of people from the same town have almost disappeared since Hitler wiped out the mother communities in Eastern Europe.

The butcher shops constitute another tie to bind the Jews of Montreal together, for a large majority of women still keep a kosher house. "Let the children eat *chazer* at a restaurant if they want," these good *yiddishe veiblach* will declare. "In my house they'll eat kosher." Of a dozen Jewish girl students under twenty-one working in an office last summer, only two did not know how long to leave the salt on the meat to insure kashruth. Not one had scruples about eating *treife* meat in a restaurant, but all who came from homes where the dietary laws were observed said that they would do so themselves when they married.

The butcher is measured against one's friend's butcher, and praised and berated by turns, depending on how much muscle it takes to cut the meat. A real housewife watches him as if he were trying to get his hand into her purse while he weighs out the soup meat. (One butcher, at least, is widely rumored to have two scales—one for when the government inspector comes in.) You can order your Friday chicken by telephone for weeks before you get one with a liver or any fat: the ingredients for chopped liver are probably being sidetracked to someone who orders four chickens, a pot roast, and a couple of pickled tongues every weekend. But the kosher butchers have a waiting list; their customers can complain only to each other.

With the Jewish grocer, too, you watch your step. He may charge a nickel more for a box of soap flakes, and you may think you saw his hand on the scale when he weighed out the bananas (what good housewife trusts the grocer?), but after all, some time you are going to want a few slices of lox or a pound of fresh cottage cheese, and can you get it from the Frenchman across the street?

Goyishe bread is only for the days when the baker has forgotten to ring the bell, or when the Jewish bakery is too far away to have someone run over for a real rye bread. The best bread in town comes from a shop near a dress factory, and the women who wheel their baby carriages past it every day speak Yiddish to their friends. But on Sunday, shiny new cars drive up with children in the back seats who don't know a *shlemiel* from a *shlimmazel;* the fathers come out of the shop with bags bulging with *pletzlach*, egg bagels, and other products appealing to the Jewish palate from generation to generation, and tossing the fruits of the family pilgrimage into the rear of the car, they roll back to their West End homes.

SERVICES in fifty synagogues every Sabbath do not seem to attract as many people as a good delicatessen does in a week. The synagogues—one Reform, two Conservative, and the rest Orthodox—are full of empty seats except on the High Holidays, when they are packed, or on the morning of a "big" Bar Mitzva.

The oldest congregation is Shearith Israel, founded by the Sephardim about two centuries ago. Built originally on a site near the river, the synagogue has, figuratively speaking, followed the congregation uptown. What is now "the old Spanish and Portu-

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guese shul," with its simple lines reminiscent of 18th-century synagogues in the United States or of New England Congregational churches of that period, was sold a few years ago. The "new shul" is in the Snowdon residential district, to which many young Jewish families are moving. An angular modernistic building designed for a community center at least as much as for a house of worship, it is following the trend of fifty years in having more and more members of Eastern European ancestry and fewer scions of the Sephardic founders.

Shaar Hashomayim and Temple Emanuel, Conservative and Reform, were founded by German Jews whose descendants form a considerable part but not the majority in today's congregations. In both, the average family income is high. Chevra Kadisha, a product of the heavy immigration at the turn of the century, is one of the few strictly Orthodox congregations where the rabbi preaches an English sermon in an effort to hold the younger group. Most of the Orthodox centers of worship are in remodeled houses, within walking distance of the members' homes, for daily prayer and study. The men who *daven* there adhere to the old idea of the synagogue as a second home and their rabbi is intended to counsel and is not, God forbid, a paid lecturer.

In spite of poor synagogue attendance in the more assimilated, modern element of the population, many a child whose parents shook off the burden of kashruth as soon as they dared, is getting a Jewish education today. The parents may eat bacon for breakfast and butter their meat sandwiches, but they want their children to "belong." So they send them to religious school on Sunday, give them Hebrew lessons and speak Yiddish conscientiously for a while each day at home. For the children's sake there is often a Jewish National Fund collecting box on the mantel. Wrapped presents at Hanukah will be added to the Hanukah *gelt* from *bobbe* and *zeide* to take the children's eyes off the Christmas trees, and the children know what matzoh is and why it is in the house, even if Mama has bought bread too.

SOME opportunities for Montreal Jews are improving. The Civil Service is opening up, with permanent positions for highly trained people as well as summer clerking jobs for students. It was felt that Canada's spy trials of 1946, where several defendants were Jews, might change this, but no such trend is discernible. Not many Jews want to work for the government, however, because salaries are small and a name like Cohen or Goldberg is not a magic carpet to the higher and more responsible posts.

Jews are among Montreal's ablest doctors and dentists, and in their crowded waiting rooms, patients talk in low tones in English, French, Yiddish, and even Ukrainian and Greek. Two specialists head departments at the McGill medical school, a few hold key positions there and in the affiliated hospitals, and still others have made notable contributions to research in cancer, allergy, and other fields. Still, in spite of the fact that they may now be able to hang their shingles on expensive homes, it is hard for them to find hospital appointments commensurate with their ability in any but the Jewish General Hospital.

"Dozens of times I've been on the point of leaving the clinic," a surgeon at another hospital said—he was a lowly demonstrator ten years after his original appointment. "Last week I was having lunch with the director and he told me they were looking all over for a good chairman for my department. I should have resigned right then, but I have this one connection with the hospital, and I can't bring myself to give it up."

Many doctors have gone to the United States, where they find better opportunities. Dr. Harry Goldblatt, known for his work on the causes of hypertension, is only one Montrealer who graduated from McGill but won his distinction south of the border. Today he is a medical research director in Los Angeles, a far higher and more fruitful post than he is likely to have had in Montreal.

A Jewish lawyer's practice is mainly in property transfers, damage suits, and the like, as legal counsel to more or less small business men. Many firms are prosperous, but few are large, and few have any connection with Saint James Street, Montreal's Wall Street. Trade union and divorce lawyers have a Gentile clientele, since most industrial workers are non-Jewish, and a Jewish divorce until very recently indeed was still scandal enough to make at least one of the principals leave town.

No Jew was a judge until Harry Batshaw

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was named to the Superior Court bench this year. The Superior Court is the highest provincial tribunal for civil suits. Judges are named by cabinet ministers in Quebec or Ottowa, and the Jews were not thought to pull enough political weight in either the provincial or the national capital to gain an appointment to the Bench. Hence the appointment of a Montreal lawyer was a complete surprise, even in informed legal circles. No Jew has ever been a public prosecutor, however, although recently some lawyers have been retained by the federal Department of Internal Revenue.

To the sorrow of her intellectuals, Canada has not yet produced an artist of the first rank in any field. Two Montreal Jewish names, however, are counted among the country's best now, and may be so considered in years to come. Abraham M. Klein, a lawyer, has written eloquent poetry on Jewish themes and just as eloquently about the *habitant* patriarch, the French Canadian family man who entertains his twelve children and their children at his stoveside on a winter Sunday, and about the Sisters of Charity walking two by two in the hospital garden above the ice-bound harbor. All are sights which go to make up the unique atmosphere of his native province. Alexander Brott, a violinist and composer in his early thirties, is concert-master and assistant conductor of the symphony orchestra, and has conducted his own works in Canada and in Europe. Montreal's string quartet has had as many as three, and always two, Jewish musicians.

Within a generation, Jews have taken over Montreal's garment industry: they are the clothing manufacturers of today and, in all likelihood, of tomorrow. The largest knitting mill in the city is owned by a Jew who emigrated from Russia during World War I. The newest and most economical grocery chain started as a small shop run by a widow and her sons in a none-too-prosperous Jewish neighborhood. Engineers and architects appear to be doing well. With new factories springing up all over Quebec, nationwide corporations have enough unfilled positions to give jobs still to the annual crop of university graduates. It was not always so. "A Jew can't get in there" is a simple statement, not a cry of protest, for most Jewish Montrealers, who are used to the barriers that hedge them in. Before World War II, it was not uncommon for a personnel manager to advise a Jewish boy who wanted to be a welder to go into the needle trades. No Jew has had a seat on the Montreal Stock Exchange or on the Curb Market and, by a tacit but effective agreement, no Jew has ever been a partner in an insurance company or a bank.

The Masonic lodges, the Canadian Legion, and the Press Club, to mention a few larger organizations, have managed to knock some bricks loose in the Jew-Gentile wall, but more intimate groups are too cohesive to follow their example. Only the rare family of Christians or Jews is on visiting terms with a family of the other faith, even if the children play together and the parents exchange a few friendly words as they hand out the washing or shovel snow. During the war, that struggle which brought together the Babbitt and the Bolshevik, the dirt farmer and the railroad president, Montreal found it necessary to have its Jewish women roll their bandages and knit their mufflers in a Jewish Red Cross.

Distinctions are breaking down—a little—wherever Jew and Gentile have a common interest. Parent-teachers' associations are introducing civic-minded Jews to pillars of the Anglican and Presbyterian churches whose children used to shout "dirty kike" in the streets of a highly respectable West End suburb. These men and women are extending a well-meaning, if somewhat self-conscious, hand of friendship to their Jewish neighbors, and hands on both sides should grow more warm and supple as the novelty of the situation wears off. One "restricted" suburb has sold a few of its attractive homes to Jews recently. The children are still barred from the public school there, but this fact is already beginning to make some of the Gentile residents uncomfortable. Another suburb, Model City, has taken down a billboard inviting motorists to build their homes in the "beautiful, restricted Town of Mount Royal."

It may be said also that the French, from an attitude of almost official hostility, are becoming more and more friendly to the Jews. The medical school of the Université de Montréal, where the rector is a monsignor

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and the registrar wears the purple canonical sash, is one of the few on the continent without a Jewish quota, written or understood. The Dominicans, the Jesuits, and other scholarly orders have put out French pamphlets explaining, in terms that any child who knows his catechism can understand, the similarities between Judaism and the Church of Rome, and the reasons why a Canadian and a Catholic should be friendly to the Jews.

Country priests in resort villages no longer warn their parishioners against selling land to the Jews from Montreal, as some pastors did ten years ago, when obscene threats were whitewashed on Laurentian boulders and Jewish parents did not like to let their children wander far from their summer cottages alone. Vacation hotels can and do still discriminate against Jews, as they do in the United States.

Almost gone from the Canadian scene is a threat that used to appear in many shop windows, a small card saying *"Achetez chez nous"*—"Buy from our own"—a slogan that in the past has often meant broken windows in Jewish stores. French Canadians are no more anti-Semitic than their English compatriots, and a greater frankness often makes them easier for many Jews to get along with than the more circumspect British.

Quebec, alas, has the most openly fascist party to reappear in Canada since 1931—the Front Corporatif Democratique. Its leader is a supporter of Adrien Arcand, all-too-successful chief of the fascist party in the 30's. (Arcand was interned between 1940 and 1945 and later, with two of his aides, sued the government for the earnings they lost while they were behind barbed wire!) The greatest danger in the feeble postwar organization is its appeal to some priests who think they are simply supporting the papal doctrine of economic corporatism when they join the Front.

But the long association of anti-Semitism with the Nazis, who waged war on Canada for almost six years, seems to have sapped the vitality of the fascist cause. If unemployment and hard times should come again, the fascists may again raise the specter of the Jew as the sinister international financier in the minds of jobless men, but this is by no means a phenomenon peculiar to Montreal or to French Canada.

INTERMARRIAGE is looked on as an *onshikenis,* a grave misfortune, by the great majority of Montreal Jews. Few of their daughters have married outside their faith; with the men, however, intermarriage has been more frequent. In these latter cases, the wife sometimes becomes Jewish for the sake of her children, especially when her in-laws' social position is higher than her own family's; on the other hand, when the husband's relatives have no particularly attractive status, the wife often takes the children to her church. A possessive Jewish mother may be willing to have her only son "go steady" years before he is ready to marry, just so that he will not "take up with a *shiksa.*"

But the fact that they tend to distrust the British and French and avoid intermarriage with them does not mean that all Montreal's eighty thousand Jews are brothers. To the Orthodox, and even to the atheist Yiddishists, the members of the Reform congregation with their organ and "Gentile" mixed choir and "lip-service" to Zionism are little better than *goyim.* Manufacturers who have prospered because in the Province of Quebec people will still work for thirty-five cents an hour dislike Jewish union organizers now much as they did the *Frantzosishe banditten* who smashed their windows in 1936. The prosperous but unschooled businessman cannot hide his mingled envy and contempt for the professional cousin who buys books and records and sends his children to college while he has a monthly struggle to meet today's high rents. Jewish Communists, like other members of that fervent group, have little use for members of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), a moderate socialist party. After all, the extremists reason, if a man knows enough to want to change the system, he should know that our way is the only way to do it. Wealthy Westmount on the western shoulder of Mount Royal, bourgeois Outremont, and plebian Saint Urbain Street, each produce their own Jews, conscious of their special position in the community.

"You have to live in Westmount twenty years before you can get into my aunt's house," one young lady says of a relative who cannot forget that her family was gentry when most of the upstarts whose terraces flank hers today on the upper level were

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swarming off the immigrant ships. As a fourth or fifth generation descendant of a German Jewish family thoroughly assimilated to British standards of etiquette, she considers herself above her noisier, heartier neighbors, much freer than she with their "newer" money.

Outremont, too, has its wealthy Jews, who have Buicks and Cadillacs outside their doors just as shiny as those that are to be found on the sloping streets of Westmount, and their wives and daughters may wear even more luxurious fur coats than those who have been "comfortable" longer. Some of them, ostentatious in their dress, eating, and donations to UJA, are waiting until they can buy a home in Westmount, but many prefer to stay in the North End, within easy reach of their factories and their friends. There are seedy streets in Outremont as well as broad avenues of substantial houses. Jews have bought some of the big, solid old structures and have built new, smarter ones too, but they also fill many shabby blocks of flats and apartments over stores. But on shaky balconies as in landscaped gardens, Outremont Jews are Jews indeed, come poverty or riches, and, as a group, speak Yiddish as much as English.

And a large part of Montreal Jewry still lives on Saint Urbain, Esplanade, and the other plebian thoroughfares just east and south of Outremont. The district has almost forty shuls and the newest and oldest parochial schools; the *Kanader Adler* and the *Jewish Chronicle* are published in this area, and here are found the best kosher restaurants and delicatessens. Yiddish, or English with a strong intonation, is the language of daily speech, for the youngsters playing hockey in the icy alleys as for the *braite yiddenes* trudging home from Main Street with their shopping bags.

At the other end of the social scale, the First Families of Montreal Jewry are still good Jews even if they seem completely assimilated to the superficial observer. Some of their forebears, Sephardim, came to Canada two centuries ago when the country was still New France; others are descendants of the Germans and Austrians who arrived a hundred years later. Old records tell of intermarriage with prominent families, both French and English, even the colonial rulers, and of subsequent conversion. But such chances to disappear from the Jewish community dropped sharply when Eastern European Jews came to Canada in large numbers. Today there is a Jewish golf course, a select Jewish bridge club, and even a Jewish yacht club. The richest Jewish family in Montreal, or, for that matter, in all of Canada, has two automatic dishwashers, one *milchig* and one *fleishig*.

Social prestige comes from being a *macher* in the Jewish community, not from patronizing the Art Gallery or contributing to the McGill Alumni Fund or to the Montreal General Hospital, where the honors follow the substantial donations of railroad and brewery magnates and those of other Big Business captains. Jewish campaign chairmen and their wives may not want to invite the door-to-door canvassers for Federation to their homes, newly "done" by an interior decorator, but their *koved* comes from their prominence in the United Israel Appeal and similar charitable endeavors, and they know it.

DESPITE such hints of progress in Jewish-Gentile relations as have been mentioned above, the sense of separateness, both from the English Protestants and from the French Catholics, remains very keen. The Canadian Jewish Congress, with headquarters in Montreal, works diligently to better the Jewish position within the existing scheme of things; its intelligent efforts may change a stone at a time—by fighting a restrictive covenant here and a gang of hoodlums there—but they do not attempt the Herculean task of building more intimate ties between Jew, Protestant, and Catholic.

Today, as for years past, the first thing Jewish parents ask their children about a new playmate is *"A Yid, a goy?"* or "Is he Jewish?" depending on the family conversational idiom. Perhaps a seven-year-old cannot say, but the walls of the ghetto close fast, and it will not be long before he can. It is a rare Jew in Montreal who does not feel most at home with other Jews. If there is indeed a community of interest with non-Jews it will take time to find it out, and for the unsophisticated it will be something of a surprise. Meanwhile, the Jews of Montreal know the constrictions and frustrations of small-town life (and perhaps some of its ease and intimacy) within a big, cosmopolitan city.

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ISRAEL, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND AMERICAN JEWRY

New Roles in the Centuries-Old Struggle

ROBERT WELTSCH

IN the protracted struggle within the United Nations for the securing of a Bill of Rights for all human beings, wherever they live, the Jews have been recognized as an interested party, and Jewish organizations accorded a special status. This was all done, however, before the Jewish state came into being. Will the emergence of Israel, which has brought such a fundamental change in the whole Jewish position and affected so many aspects of Jewish activity in the international field, likewise affect the Jewish attitude toward human rights?

The split of Jewry into Israeli citizens and Diaspora Jews is usually held to be a great turning point in contemporary Jewish history and one that requires an over-all readjustment. All the more surprising that the need for a new clarification is all but ignored in dealing with an issue that most deeply involves the traditional Jewish attitude to the fundamental problem of the relations between individual and state, that of human rights. Today the struggle must go forward in a new setting. For now, for the first time in modern history, a Jewish state has come into being; and henceforth the concept of state is no longer solely identified, as it used to be, with the "other" side – that side to which Jews, as citizens of preponderantly Gentile states, used to address their claims.

DURING the struggle for emancipation and thereafter, Jews were always among the most consistent fighters for the rights of man. The Jewish emancipation in Europe began with the Enlightenment, which was inspired primarily by a new respect for the individual in his quality as human being; to which was joined a belief in the possibility of guaranteeing his rights by law and agreement. It was natural that Jews—if only for reasons of sheer self-interest—were steadfast in their advocacy of the inviolability of the law and of equality before it, and in insisting that conflicts be settled according to principles of legality.

It is sometimes alleged that the Jewish defense of human rights, though veiled in phrases of idealist philosophy, is the result *only* of the self-interest of a group that has everything to gain from the rule of human rights. Such an argument is an over-simplification and a misconception of our spiritual history. The ideas of equality and justice for the individual are deeply embedded in Jewish tradition. The Bible teaches that man was created in the image of God: "man" as such, not a particular kind of man, not the man of a certain race, creed, or color, not the Jew only, or the member of any other specific national group. Man *as* man is entitled to be recognized as God's creation and, as a human being, he has inviolable claims respecting the dignity of his person. This creed has found expression in ancient Jewish law—though not consistently throughout—

WITH this reminder to Jewry of its particularly close and perhaps unique connection with the issue of human rights whenever and wherever it is raised, ROBERT WELTSCH continues as before his latter-day contribution to the immemorial Jewish tradition that requires that at least one voice be raised up in every generation in Israel to stir our consciences in the name of justice and righteousness. This, in the teeth of whatever may at the moment seem our own closest interests. Dr. Weltsch was born in Prague in 1891, a member of Kafka's generation, and was educated at the University of Prague, where he took his doctorate in law. From 1919 to 1938 he was editor of the *Juedische Rundschau*, official organ of the Zionist Organization in Germany. In 1938 he went to Palestine, where he now resides between his many trips to Western Europe. The present article was sent to us from London. Dr. Weltsch has appeared in COMMENTARY frequently.

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and was preached again and again by Jewish prophets. It triumphed in original Christian doctrine, where it was coupled with the heritage of Greek philosophy, and it was reborn in the "natural law" of the 18th century. Throughout the ages, this notion of man's dignity has prodded the conscience of humanity against injustice and inequality.

It is more than a mere coincidence that the dignity of the individual had to be reaffirmed most strongly in the 18th century, when the modern national state was born. Opposition to the extension of human rights has most often been inspired by considerations of state; state authorities believed that inviolable rights granted to the individual might under certain circumstances menace the integrity and security of the community. Thus, defining the boundaries between state and individual rights became a task that political philosophers have again and again undertaken with an urgency dictated by the importance of the problem – though with varying degrees of success.

"It would be very desirable," said Lessing almost two hundred years ago, "for every state to have men who would be above all prejudices of nationality and would know precisely when patriotism ceased to be a virtue." That "patriotism is not enough" is self-evident to anyone whose thinking has been shaped by either the Enlightenment or the canons of religion. But few nationalists will accept this. In some well-known instances, national leaders have tried to give their nationalism a moral justification by identifying the egotistic interests of their own countries with those of humanity at large. In our lifetime we have seen how words that imply supranational values, such as *peace, freedom, humanity,* have been abused. Political propaganda pays obeisance to these ideals, but distorts their meaning to its own purposes. Only in its most extreme form, however, does nationalism openly declare its hostility to the very concept of "humanity"; Goebbels and Hitler, following Nietzsche, branded it a subversive force invented by the weak to undermine the strong. The Soviets, in their turn, now denounce "cosmopolitanism" as an aberration from true patriotism.

Despite all the current talk of "freedoms" –four and otherwise–the fundamental alignment in this struggle between the state and the human spirit has remained unchanged. Broadly speaking, it is the conflict between state and individual, or between *raison d'état* and human conscience. It involves, of course, the struggles of oppressed minorities against their oppressors. In these, I repeat, the Jews–as a collectivity, apart from the actions of individuals–have always been on the side of liberty and human rights as against authoritarian tendencies.

Now, however, for the first time in modern history, the position of the Jews has become Janus-like. While Diaspora Jewry is naturally continuing its efforts to secure equality, there is *one* point on the battlefront where Jews are "on the other side of the barricades." In the State of Israel Jews face at least a potential conflict between their own *raison d'état* and their age-old championship of humanism, freedom, and the rule of law. Israel must now, like any other state, look with distrust upon the disruptive forces inherent in–or disguised as–claims for minority or human rights. To be sure, up to now all the official proclamations of the State of Israel have shown an awareness of such rights, at least in principle. But in practice Israel cannot escape a dilemma inherent in the very nature of statehood.

Can the great Jewish organizations of the Diaspora ignore this fundamental change in the Jewish position? Israel, after all, is the only Jewish member of the United Nations, therefore the only Jewish representation that is on equal footing with the other UN members and entitled to vote on all issues. It would indeed be awkward if the Jewish voice in this international forum were compelled by circumstances beyond its choice to contradict principles for which Jews have stood throughout the ages.

In Israel itself people are more alive to the problem than elsewhere. They feel strongly that the creation of the state has set them

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free in some respects, but has begun to restrain their freedom of action in others. Despite the long Jewish commitment to the rule of law, Israel's representatives to the UN have had to present the world with a series of *faits accomplis*. The requirements of power politics or naked Machiavellianism have never been the actual or stated impulse behind the policies of Israel, yet political realism has increasingly dictated policy.

A CONSCIOUSNESS of this dilemma is well illustrated by an article in one of the leading Hebrew newspapers in Israel. It shows, in sharp relief, what kind of considerations arise when Jews, who once thought they could answer individual and communal problems on the basis of moral principles alone, have to cope with the needs of a state. Discussing the question as to how Israel ought to have voted in the UN on an American motion to censure Hungary, Bulgaria, and Rumania for their violation of human rights, Arye Gelblum, one of the most gifted of the younger Israeli journalists, wrote in *Ha-aretz* of November 4, 1949:

"On the one hand, there were strong arguments that we should support the Russian attitude, not only because Russia regarded it as a test case, not only because a vote in favor of the American motion would result in a definite breakdown of our relations with the Soviet Union, but also on the merits of the case. It is clear that the question was raised in order to embarrass Russia and not out of concern for human rights, for otherwise the UN would have to interfere elsewhere, in South Africa, for instance, and even in regard to the Negro question in the United States. Secondly, the question was raised in connection with the Mindszenty case and similar trials; but there is no proof that the accused were innocent according to the laws of the peoples' democracies. Thirdly, the fight against the Church in these countries is a political fight, which should not be mixed up with human rights. Fourthly, Catholics in Poland or Hungary do not have less freedom of conscience than anti-Catholics in other countries; this is shown by the Papal edict which inflicts severe mental pain on those who are religious Catholics and at the same time believe in a Communist form of society. Fifthly, a vote for America would imply not only an unfriendly attitude towards Hungary and Rumania, with whom our relations are strained, but also towards Bulgaria, with whom our relations are excellent. Sixthly, a vote for the US resolution would create a precedent that might tomorrow give others a pretext to interfere in our affairs, here in the State of Israel, on behalf of a communal or religious minority in Israel.

"On the other hand, one could also argue the contrary: in favor of UN intervention for the sake of human rights. (1) The trials against the Church in Communist countries create by implication an immense problem in connection with relations between the Vatican and Jews. Many of the top Communists in Hungary and Rumania are Jews, and this provokes the Vatican to anger against Jews as well as Communists. Therefore Israel's vote in this matter was watched with the greatest interest, and, had it been in favor of the Russian bloc, would have led to far-reaching consequences for the Vatican and for Catholic countries. (2) A vote for the American resolution would create a precedent as regards UN intervention that we Jews would be able to exploit in cases of anti-Jewish persecution or discrimination in other countries. The fact that we did not vote for the US resolution (we abstained) makes it difficult for us to argue in favor of intervention in the case of the persecution of Jews in Iraq. (3) A vote in favor of UN intervention for the protection of human rights would have enabled us to raise, at an appropriate time, the question of the prohibition of emigration from Rumania and Hungary—for the right to emigration is included in the Declaration of Human Rights. In this session of the Assembly there occurred a ridiculous situation when the American representative raised the question of the fate of the Jewish communities in those countries—and we were silent!

"As to the problem of the right of petition [to the UN] . . . there is a strange conflict

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in our camp. Jewish organizations throughout the world are interested in an extension to non-governmental bodies of the right of petition in order to facilitate the defense of Jewish rights in various countries, while Israel is bound to consider also the possibilities afforded thereby to some groups and minorities in her own midst."

The fact that Israel as a state is compelled to approach political problems, even those closely connected with Israeli interests, from the point of view of international expediency has evoked a salient comment from the veteran Hebrew writer Mosche Smelansky. "An instructive example of 'independence' was given to us by our representative in the UN," he wrote. "In one of the committees, a representative of the United States who happened to be a Jew accused Rumania of disregarding the great principles of freedom of opinion and freedom of conscience, and on this occasion he also mentioned the violation of the freedom of Jews. One would have expected that the representative of the State of Israel would openly support his American Jewish colleague. But, alas, he filled his mouth with water, and remained silent. Is this not an instance of 'servitude within freedom' in a new version?"*

I DO not mention these problems in order to criticize the attitude taken by the Israeli delegation in the various bodies of the UN. It is not the behavior of the Israeli delegation in this or other questions that primarily concerns me here—it is making clear the new situation as such. It must be confessed that, confronted with Israel's short experience as a state, our former Jewish self-righteousness has been shattered. In the past we sometimes claimed, as Jews, an innate moral superiority (which was always questionable) in dealing with human demands. But now we are more "normal." What appears to apply to other states, namely, that political considerations overshadow all other motives, now applies to Israel, too.

This could, of course, make it easier for us to find a common language with others. As long as no Jewish state existed, the Jews were in a favorable position as far as the advocacy of abstract principles was concerned. They spoke with the voice of a minority struggling for equal rights. They could afford the luxury of thinking in moral instead of political categories; their main concern was to claim that these principles be applied to themselves. That was what, as I have mentioned, made Jewish advocacy of human rights a little suspect in the eyes of those who judged social relations according to *raison d'état*. Today we are all in the same boat. The Jews are no longer exempt from the necessity of proving their moral firmness by their willingness to adhere to certain universal principles even when they clash with national self-interest.

In any case, the conflict of moral principles rooted in the Jewish ethic with the real or alleged interests of the Jewish state has now become, in a twofold sense, a central problem for Jews throughout the world. It is not a situation likely to have immediate effects, nor does it admit of radical solutions, but certainly it does require that we be aware of it as a new situation. And it requires fresh and searching re-examination.

Is it too optimistic to hope that the association of the two branches of Judaism, Israel and the Diaspora, with their admittedly divergent points of view, may produce a new synthesis that will inspire new insights in the approach to human affairs? Notwithstanding the complicated circumstances under which the State of Israel was born, it can be taken for granted that any future Israeli constitution will proclaim the sanctity of human rights. The test will come when it is proposed that certain rights of procedure be granted, such as the right of petition of an individual or a minority to a supra-national authority.

In an age characterized by general misuse of high-sounding words, implementation has become more important than philosophy.

**Servitude within Freedom* is the title of a famous tract by Ahad Ha-am, the Hebrew Zionist classic, written fifty years ago to castigate Jewish assimilationists who were proud of their civic freedom but felt they had to hide their Judaism.

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This is why the right of petition to safeguard human rights is one of the principal demands of world Jewry to the UN.*

FAITH in justice and equality is not proved, however, by invoking them only for oneself; one must apply them to others as well as to oneself. In the matter of human rights, the Jews are now—though in different places—playing the roles both of claimant and of addressee. It would be a great human achievement if an honest harmony could be established between the two.

In this endeavor, a responsibility lies with Diaspora Jewry as well as with the people of Israel. Diaspora Jewry, and especially its leading group, American Jewry, has the liberty and the status to continue to act as an objective, uninhibited fighter for the rights of all oppressed groups, including Jews. It can do so to the extent that it is committed to humanity and to the traditional Jewish ethic rather than to any particular national entity. Though it is evident that the existence of Israel will impose an obligation to be exceptionally tactful upon any Jewish group operating in the international field, world Jewry should certainly not alter its aim of achieving, step by step, universal equality and respect for the individual.

One of the principal motives of Zionism, now accepted by the majority of former non-Zionists as well, was the idea of Zion as a moral and spiritual center for the whole of Jewry. After the decline of religion, many people believed that Jewish life would be inspired and enriched by cultural and spiritual emanations from such a great center. They would give a new meaning to a Judaism that otherwise, according to this opinion, would become too void of content to attract or hold the younger generation. This view seems to be vindicated by the immense response that recent events in Palestine found in American Jewry, and by Israel's rejuvenating effect on large parts of Diaspora Jewry.

On the other hand, it has not been made equally clear that this profitable relationship ought to be mutual. A peculiar function, it would seem, will have to devolve on Diaspora Jewry as regards the Jewish state. (I do not mean fund-raising, which, owing to the immense financial requirements of Israel, is often regarded as the principal avenue of contribution of American Jewry.) Just as the Diaspora needs the national cultural values that may be created in Israel, so Israel herself needs a compensating spiritual influence to check any tendencies to an excessively isolationist nationalism. For it will be a miracle if the young Israelis now growing up in an atmosphere of permanent watchfulness and semi-military preparedness do not fall prey to nationalist narrow-mindedness which inclines to underestimate, even scorn, universal and supra-national human values.

A determined lead to preserve the Jewish humanist approach can be taken only by American Jewry, which alone has the power and strength to assert itself within the Jewish world community. For American Jewry to steadfastly uphold human ideals, independently of transient political situations, would be of a great service to Judaism as a whole, and in the long run to the people of Israel too. American Jewry can save the Israeli outlook from provincialism; it can link Israel with the larger civilized world and transmit to her what is best in the human traditions of the great free countries outside. The view that external influence may be needed to keep Israel within the orbit of Jewish ethical tradition may seem exaggerated at the present moment—while European-educated Jews are still predominant in Israel—but it can soon become a matter of bitter reality.

The unequivocal fight of world Jewry for human rights, and the ideals on which this fight is based, must remain, as it has been in the past, a pivot in the common structure of Jewish political thought. But in order for this to happen, the new reality must be faced with open eyes, and the problem boldly tackled.

*It is comprehensively argued in a pamphlet issued by the Consultative Council of Jewish Organizations, called "Implementation of an International Covenant of Human Rights" and submitted as a memorandum to the Commission on Human Rights (Fourth Session).

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THE CAMPAIGN

A Story

JULIUS HORWITZ

PAUL stood on the bleak windy corner where the ward officially began. Down the drab side-streets ran the squared-off residential blocks, ill-kept, dim, gray, wooden frame houses, heated by coal furnaces, fed by credit grocery stores. Directly north ran the Crawford Heights streetcar line, noisy, slow, clanging past the smoke-shops, lolling men, the poolrooms, cluttered drygoods stores, big ugly supermarkets—crowded, smelly, cash-registers ringing—the noisy colored Bar-B-Q joints—hot sauce on black charcoal-broiled spare-ribs—more dirty, bleak little shops, until the neighborhood came to an end with the final stop of the streetcar line.

On all sides, spread around in a politically bound triangle were ten thousand voters. In a blind, dumb way he knew that all of these people had their own personalities that he could never hope to reach in a political campaign—but there must be some point of contact. So many people. So many businesses. So many homes. Everybody had a place to sleep. Everybody trying. The meat market with the kosher meat sign. The meat market with the pork sausages hanging in a line like a corps of inflated ballet dancers.

"GITERMAN, I'm going to give you the campaign straight," Patty began stiffly. "You're not as wise politically as we are but you've got a lot of stuff on the ball. Certainly enough to beat out Consolo if you're smart enough.

"The way I see it, it's like this. A Jew against an Italian. No—don't get me wrong. I'm not talking up racial isues. I'm not even thinking of any kind of trouble. But this neighborhood is just about half-Italian, half-Jewish. And that's the way the votes'll stack up."

"I think I see what you mean, Patty," Paul started to say, carefully choosing his words. "But I don't think the campaign has to be fought on purely racial grounds. I think I've got a good enough record in the ward to beat out Consolo. But if Consolo starts to make it a racial issue, don't worry, I'll carry the ball—"

"I'm glad to hear you say that, Giterman. It'll make the campaign a lot easier. I've worked with Jewish people all of my life. A Jew is no different to me than whatever you want to pick out of the hat. But hell—let's not get involved in talking. You know how we stand."

Patty stood up ceremoniously. Giterman stood up. They shook hands.

"HELLO Mister President!"

"His Honor, the Mayor!"

"Hello Councilman! Any free passes to the fights?"

Happy, excited, shouting, Paul's whole family was on hand for the meeting he had arranged. His cousins filled the living room and flowed over into the dining room where they nibbled on *lekach* and hard candy. Paul's mother sat in a corner of the couch, tired from having prepared a big meal for all of her relatives. Why couldn't they bring cold cuts? Who knows what a mother feels when her son is being feted? For nobody fulfills a dream. And a child is always a dream of its mother.

"What do you say, Paul," his Uncle Morris asked above the excitement, "are you going to change the face of Crawford Heights?"

JULIUS HORWITZ, who was born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1920, has been working on a series of short stories about city life. His most recent contribution to COMMENTARY was "The Conspirators" published in our November 1949 issue.

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"If I get your vote eight times," Paul joked.

"There ought to be a law for us voting at least ten times!" his uncle joked back. "A special privilege for relatives!" The uncle looked at his nephew, proud, smiling. He remembered Paul when he was a baby. His little nephew running for councilman! The way the world moves, boom, swift. He used to hold him on his lap and say, *nu,* shine my shoes, you'll make your first dime. Now he could boast at the store, that little stinker, he used to wet my pants, now he's a councilman! Sure, free passes for anything. I'm his favorite uncle!

"Seriously," Paul said, addressing the whole group, "I'm going to need all your help. A councilman race is a private neighborhood affair. It doesn't involve the city, the state, the country. Just us. And sometimes the margin is so small that a couple of votes can swing the election. A simple majority, one vote. That's why all of you are going to have to get up as many pledges as possible. We'll ring doorbells—wake up the neighborhood—show them who the better man is!"

"Wheee!" Uncle Morris shouted. "He already talks like a politician!"

"Consolo is making a strong play for the colored vote," Patty told Paul at a party strategy meeting. "It's up to you now to out-promise him. Prove to those colored people that you'll look out for them in the City Council. Their vote may swing the election."

Paul nodded. He was beginning to feel the campaign. Move in quick, make a speech, strike out, make another speech, ring doorbells—talk! talk! talk! talk! talk! Talk to people! That was the most important thing.

Face-to-face contact. This colored business wouldn't floor him. Didn't he grow up in the downtown colored section. Weren't his first friends colored? He never felt that need in himself to say "nigger"—to talk down the colored people—to become as vicious as some people he knew. . . .

"Well, Paul," his mother asked him at supper, "how are you making out?"

"All right, Ma."

"And you think you'll be elected?"

"I hope so, Ma."

"And if you're elected—what then?"

His mother didn't wait for an answer. She carried the dirty dishes into the kitchen. She had begun to hear talk. Neighbors came over to the house. The other man wasn't going to let the election go so easy. Paul might get hurt. This new business! Mrs. Fine said they might cut Paul up, kick him in the belly, Mrs. Goldberg said, break his arms. He shouldn't drive around alone at night. The gangsters! They might come to the house. The trouble they could cause.

Paul left the table and sat down by the telephone and dialed Patty. This new business was unreal. Patty had mentioned it offhand. The opposition might have him beat up. Should he ask for police protection? No—that would only show that he was frightened. He still remembered his judo from the army. The side of your palm is the most dangerous weapon in the world. Let those punks get smart with him! He could see himself in action, the side of his palm cutting down goons, men falling all around him, his face sweaty, arms swinging, then somebody coming at him with a knife, a swift kick to the groin, the man going down begging to be let alone. . . .

"Hello! Hello!"

"Oh—hello Patty. This is Giterman."

"Hello Paul. What's new?"

"I'm just getting ready to make a speech at Stevens Hall."

"You'd better make it good. Consolo has hit that neighborhood with sound trucks day and night promising those poor bastards everything but the kitchen sink."

"I've got a speech I think will make the grade. Tell me," Paul asked, his voice dropping down to a whisper, "is there anything to the rumor that Consolo hired a couple of goons to take care of me?"

"No—Consolo wouldn't do a dumb thing like that. He's too smart a politician. But he has a lot of political bums hanging

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around his place. There's a possibility that a couple of wise guys might think that if they beat up a Jew he'll just vanish out of the campaign. I'd advise you to have a couple of guys in the car with you when you travel around. Don't travel around alone. It might set those punks thinking."

"How about police protection?"

"If you were anybody else, I'd say OK. But you're a Jew, Giterman. You can't forget that and police protection will go against you. They'll say you're afraid."

"I don't see where it makes any difference—"

"It's not what you see or think, Giterman. It's what is. And that's the way people think. Don't be afraid to swing a wrench. I won't keep you any longer."

Paul hung up. He walked into the foyer to get his coat. Oh those jeeps in the army with a machine gun on the hood. That's the kind of car he should drive around in. Brrumph—one burst! He still couldn't get down to the reality of it. Three men sitting in a room plotting to beat him up. It only happened in the movies. Nuts! Pick up any edition of the paper. He didn't want the election to hinge on whether he was a Jew or Consolo an Italian. Damn it, that wasn't the issue!

IT RAINED on election day. The voters were late getting to the polls. Paul went from door to door urging the people to vote. The whole family took the day off to ring doorbells. They borrowed umbrellas and escorted voters through the rain, making sure that everyone who could vote, voted.

"PAUL, if you win," Uncle Morris announced to the jammed living room, "I'm going to drink champagne for the first time since your *bris*. Look! I've already invested $6.98 for a bottle!" He held up the bottle and everybody laughed.

Paul's mother was busy in the hot kitchen looking after the *lekach*. Two cakes were still in the oven, three big honey-cakes were cooling off on the kitchen table. *Lekach*, whisky, herring, the table piled high—it seemed like Paul's Bar Mitzva all over again.

The neighbors shoved their way into the living room to pat Paul on his back. A baby—Paul Giterman who used to run around with his nose dripping—a Jewish boy from the neighborhood—he might be elected councilman. The radio would tell the news. The street needed another lamp post, more garbage pick-ups. . . .

Everybody shushed. The radio announcer was coming to Paul's name. "From Ward 21, late returns, Paul Giterman, 4,478; Alberto Consolo, 3,896." Everybody yelled. Uncle Morris made his own private joke. "How can anybody hear my cork pop in all this noise!" Paul stood up on a chair, flushed, happy, smiling, shaking everybody's hand, laughing, crying. His mother came into the living room with a trayful of *lekach*, tears running down her face. A newspaper photographer took a picture of Paul surrounded by his neighbors and relatives. "Look," they all cried, "he's in the paper already!"

"You'll have to excuse me!" Paul shouted above the excitement. "We're having a victory celebration down at party headquarters. Eat, drink, be happy—and I'll be back as soon as I can, thanks everybody for your help!" Paul made his way through a room full of handshakes.

WHAT to say now at party headquarters? What could he say except that everybody in the neighborhood had pitched in to do a terrific job. Now the important thing was to hold office. He felt that same overwhelming paternalism toward his voters that a bridegroom feels toward his bride while the marriage service is being intoned. Every rock, street, lamp light, garbage can, water plug, it all lay under his personal protection. Paul pulled up and parked his car opposite party headquarters. He could hear the singing going on inside.

"Hey fellow!" Somebody motioned to Paul from the sidewalk. Paul opened the door. A tall, heavy figure pulled him out of the seat. Before Paul could say a word the attacker had him down on the sidewalk, kicked him twice. Paul tried to rise. The

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stranger lifted Paul to his feet, struck him a heavy blow on the mouth. Paul fell back, crumpling on the sidewalk. The stranger lifted his foot to kick Paul again but just then a voice cried out, "Hey!" The man fled down the dark street.

THE laughter stopped in the living room. Everybody felt nervous, dry, nobody knew what to say. The outrage! To make a victory, a celebration, such a cheap thing. They sat in mumbled silence waiting for Paul to come back from the emergency ward. . . .

It was past midnight when Paul walked into the living room. His suit was torn, one side of his face was bandaged. The phone rang before any of the newspaper reporters or neighbors could ask questions. "It's for you, Paul," his cousin announced. "Consolo would *like* to talk to you."

The people edged closer to the telephone in the dining room.

"Yes Al . . . Sure Al . . . No Al . . . Of course Al . . . You wouldn't do that Al . . . Sure Al . . . I know Al . . . Of course Al . . . Sure Al . . . Thanks Al . . . Sure—goodbye Al."

Paul hung up. A photographer snapped a picture of Paul by the telephone. The reporters and neighbors moved in close around him. They stood waiting. Giving him a chance to make the first statement. Paul looked at their faces. What to believe? What did they believe? Damn it! Why did it have to happen? He was sick that he couldn't have stood face to face with whoever slugged him, fought it out. It was so God damn dirty to be beat up, thrown to the ground like you were dirt, kicked like a sick dog. Oh he'd like to find the bastard. . . .

"It's nothing," Paul said, looking at all of the faces surrounding him, addressing no one in particular. "Some cheap drunk lost an election bet and took it out on me. There's nothing more to the incident."

Paul's Uncle Morris held up a full bottle of whisky. "Well! what're we standing around for," he cried out, "this isn't a funeral! Let's drink to the new councilman!" He brought the whiskey bottle down with an elaborate gesture and started filling the glasses that were eagerly pressed in front of him. "And *lekach*—the herring—there's a whole table of corned beef left—let's make this a real party!"

Somebody pressed a plate of potato salad, slices of corned beef and pastrami, a dill pickle and a smear of mustard into Paul's hand. The announcer on the radio was busy summing up the election results. "They had a special bulletin about your getting beat up," somebody buzzed in Paul's ear. He looked down dumbly on the plate of food.

Ooomphoooo—Paul said soundlessly. How big do you have to be? How big do you have to be before they don't dare knock you down—how big?

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

BOYHOOD IN MOBILE

A Memoir

JOSEPH M. PROSKAUER

IN MOBILE during the ante-bellum days, a strikingly large proportion of the population was foreign born; almost twenty-five per cent, in fact, of a city of some twenty-nine thousand. While the French influence predominated, so much so that many Negroes spoke French, the Gulf City was truly cosmopolitan. The very names of the streets give eloquent testimony: Dauphin and Royal; Conti and Eslava; St. Michael, St. Louis, St. Joseph, and St. Emanuel; Conception and St. Francis; Jackson, Hamilton, and Monroe; Church, Commerce, and Water.

Mobile was thus the ideal melting pot from which an American was to emerge sensitive to the traditions of many peoples. It had a perplexing combination of languor and fervor; of intensities of rivalry and friendliness; of diverse culture and undivided loyalties. And to this melting pot came, in the middle of the 19th century, substantial numbers of the forty-eighters fleeing from the oppressions of Germany and Austria. This background and this ethos of a city were as pregnant for the future as the personal heritage into which I was born on August 6, 1877.

MY MATERNAL grandfather's uncle was the pioneer. He was known as "Uncle Weiss" and, following the habit of his people, later brought over to America my grandfather, William H. Leinkauf, from Pressburg in Hungary. Uncle Weiss and his daughter "Cousin Katie" ran the primary school where I first learned my alphabet in the basement of an ancient ante-bellum house on Church Street.

One visited the family by climbing the divided exterior staircase to the porch from which rose white pillars in classic dignity. One entered the school by the door underneath the porch. Here was fit setting for Uncle Weiss, who still remained the family head even after my grandfather had passed from the humble status of a peddler with a pack on his back through the stage of a successful merchant to the final sanctity of a private banker and, for his last twenty-five years, chairman of the local school board. One of the largest public schools in the city still bears my grandfather's name. Scrupulous, industrious, and honorable, he carved a career in which his proudest possession was his American citizenship.

The family of his wife, Caroline Bloch, had come from the Rheinfals, in Germany, and she brought some of that old section's characteristic joy of living, love of music, and devotion to home and family to round out the harmonious domestic scene into which their eldest child, my mother, Rebecca, was born.

Rebecca Leinkauf, the first native-born

JOSEPH M. PROSKAUER has been for some decades an outstanding leader in Jewish affairs, and a distinguished personality on the American scene. A leading member of the bar of New York City, a former Justice of the Supreme Court of the New York Appellate Division, and an eloquent and constant fighter for the protection and extension of Jewish rights and security, and of human rights generally, Judge Proskauer served as president of the American Jewish Committee from 1943 to 1949, and is now its honorary president. This article is taken from the first chapters of an autobiography to be published this month by Farrar, Straus.

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American of the family, grew up to be gentle housewife and mother; mother indeed to many besides her own offspring. Both white and Negro knew her affectionately as "Miss Becky" or "Aunt Becky." Inheriting the love of music of her mother's family, she passed it on to me, at least, of her children. Physically frail, she let the overpowering intensity of her love and mercy draw at times too tautly on her nerves. But the storm would soon pass and the sunshine of a true maternal nature irradiated through her every relationship in life.

My grandmother's brother, Joseph, was a "professor" of music in a day and age when every teacher, no matter of what, was given that title of distinction. For several decades he taught the elements of music at Spring Hill College, the great Jesuit institution in Mobile; and among my happiest holidays were those when he would take me out to the college for a visit and the kindly fathers would ply me to the bursting point with cake and lemonade.

On the paternal side, my grandfather, Julius Proskauer, came from Breslau to Philadelphia around 1850, while my father was still a small child. Julius soon moved to Richmond, to live there for the rest of his life. He had in succession three wives and sired ten children. The eldest of these, Adolph, left Richmond to settle in Mobile, and when my father, Alfred, who was many years his junior, reached manhood, he joined his elder brother. Of my grandfather, Julius, I have only the memories of his very old age—a carefree, blithe octogenarian, who had lived his life in rearing his offspring.

MY UNCLE Adolph was the paternal family head in Mobile by right of conquest. I knew him as "Uncle Major"—tall, stout, erect, with the flowing side-whiskers which every gentleman of the era cultivated. To me as a boy he was a legendary hero who had been wounded at Gettysburg. But at the time I was more interested in the Sunday dinners at "Uncle Major's," which introduced me to such mysteries as flaming rum omelets and a household as "Southern" in hospitality and elegance as any in the town.

My father was the younger brother both in years and in attitude, even though he flaunted the same military bearing and type of whiskered adornment. Too young for army service during the War between the States, he nevertheless held a higher rank than my uncle, that of "colonel," though it was in fact a mere courtesy title. If he lacked the Major's gasconade, he was still a gallant figure, loyal and wise, and a true self-sacrificing helpmate to wife, brother, and children. But he always lived in the shadow of the greater glory of the Major. It was only years later that I discovered that the true story of the Major's career was even better than the legend. I found it in Captain Park's first-hand *Sketch of the Twelfth Alabama Infantry, of Battle's Brigade, Rode's Division, Early's Corps, of the Army of Northern Virginia.*

Adolph had gone to war with the first muster of troops as a noncommissioned officer in Company C. His "buddy," afterward Lieutenant E. Karcher, is described by Captain Park succinctly as "a native of Germany and a Jew. He was a gallant soldier." But of my uncle, Captain Park wrote much more fully and with obvious admiration: "Captain Adolph Proskauer, promoted to major. An interesting circumstance connected with Major Proskauer is that he was a German Jew, of excellent education, very handsome personal appearance, and perhaps the best dressed man in the regiment. He became senior captain, and while we were encamped near Fredericksburg in 1863, there being a vacancy in the position of major of the regiment, he made formal application for promotion. Col. Pickens did not favor his appointment but preferred Capt. John W. McNeely, of Company F, who was an able young officer and former teacher at Tuskegee and at Auburn, Alabama, and who was thoroughly equipped for the position of Major, and was second in rank.

"In order to carry out his wishes the Colonel obtained the appointment of an Examining Court of the most distinguished character, namely, Gen. Junius Daniel, Gen. S. D. Ramseur, both of N. C. brigades, and Col. E. L. Hobson of the 5th Ala. It was stated in camp that Col. Pickens hinted to this Committee of Examiners that he hoped they would be so rigid that Capt. Proskauer could not pass the examination.

"During the day of the examination there was unusual interest felt by the officers of the camp, and especially by the Colonel. Late in the afternoon, after an all-day exam-

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ination had been concluded, one of the officers rode rapidly up to Col. Pickens' headquarters and, in reply to an anxious inquiry, was told that the Committee had done all they could to defeat Capt. Proskauer, but that after an examination in squad drill, in company drill, in brigade drill, in drill by echelon, and in the army movements as suggested in Jomini's tactics, Captain Proskauer did not fail to answer promptly and accurately every question. The General added, 'he knows more about tactics than any of the Examining Committee, and we were forced to recommend his promotion.'

"I recall seeing this gallant officer at the battle of Gettysburg, calmly standing amid his regiment, smoking a cigar, issuing his orders and animating the men, until a bullet through his cheek disabled him. . . ."

In a later description of that crucial battle Park added that "Colonel Pickens sent me to hospital on Major Proskauer's horse. Our gallant Jew Major smoked his cigars calmly and coolly in the thickest of the fight."

Professor Lonn, in her *Foreigners in the Confederacy*, gives some further information. "No longer fit for active service he became a major in the Invalid Corps at Mobile. Undoubtedly he would have risen to higher rank if he had not been disabled." She solemnly closes her reference with the comment that "Americans enjoyed marveling at Major Proskauer's taste for fried mushrooms."

With such a background it was quite natural that I should be a patriotic boy. But until 1898 patriotism in Alabama was not a simple concept. My grandmother's attic was a storehouse of worthless Confederate bills. My nurse, "Aunt Myra," would tell me in awed tones of the day the arsenal exploded. My uncle's partner, Leopold Strauss, was known only as "Johnny" because he had been a fighting Johnny Reb without fear and without reproach. I had never seen a Fourth of July celebration. We shot our fireworks at Christmas, not on Independence Day. And if any boy in town had been asked who was the greatest poet in the world, his unhesitating answer would have been Father Ryan—the local Catholic priest who composed "The Blue and the Gray." Until my entrance to college in 1892, I was never quite sure that a "Yankee" could be anything but damned.

Thus, my Americanism did not come full-panoplied. It was born of conflict. It became whole and complete only in 1898, when we were at war with Spain. General Joseph Wheeler, CSA, of Alabama, was then made General Joseph Wheeler, USA. A wave of emotion brought Alabama back into the Union. I was home for the summer vacation and on July the Fourth there was a celebration in Bienville Square. The Declaration of Independence was once more proclaimed in Mobile; and though the band played "Dixie," it added "The Star Spangled Banner."

I went home and tried to celebrate the new birth of the Union in verses which were printed in the college magazine in the fall and were reprinted widely in the press of the nation. I wrote:

REUNION

Swords of the snow-clad Northland,
Swords of the rose-clad South;
Braving as one the foeman,
Daring the cannon's mouth.

Ye tell the end of the story
Written in letters of blood,
When against sons of the Northland,
Sons of the Southland stood.

Ye tell how in fire of battle
Perished the Stars and Bars;
But the flames they fed shed glory
Anew on the Stripes and Stars.

And the fame of the Gray that perished,
And the fame of the Blue that won,
Are yours, ye swords of the Northland
And swords of the Southern sun.

Then, where the battle surges,
Together flash on the foe,
Guarding the starry banner
Wherever it chance to go.

And men of the North who die there,
For you shall the Southland weep;
And roses and rich magnolia
Shall bury your ashes deep.

And men of the South whose life-blood
Is staining the Cuban earth;
The Northland shall mourn and bless you
As children of her own birth.

And thou great united nation,
Whose sons thus die for thee,

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Born of the Gray that perished
And the Blue of victory.

Thou shalt cherish alike in glory,
Thou shalt honor alike the name
Of the sons of the South and the Northland,
That die for thy flag and thy fame.

MY EARLIEST recollection, keenly vivid, is of the overpowering sweetness of the magnolia tree, as I played by the open window of the cottage on Government Street at the foot of Charles, where I was born. It was the day we were to move "downtown" to St. Francis Street, between Joachim and Jackson. Old Dr. Ketchum, who had brought me into the world, was driving by in his gig drawn by two diminutive "calico" horses which were in the nature of a local trademark. He gave me a ride to my new home.

Here was a new setting for boyhood. There was the central hall with the front and back parlors on one side, the dining room on the other; the front porch faced the street with its diminutive orange trees, and the steps led down to the "front garden," where Cary, the Negro gardener, used to astound us with the correct Latin nomenclature for every blossom. The "swing yard" lay behind it, while to the other side an alleyway ended in the back yard with its two big chinaberry trees. To the rear was the stable with the servants' quarters above; a wing connected it to the main house, consisting of the kitchen beneath and more servants' rooms overhead.

It was on the back porch of the main house that I used to sit and read until old Aunt Myra, ex-slave of my grandfather's, and second mother to me, would solemnly adjure me not to wear holes in the seat of my pants. And if I whittled or wrote on a Saturday, she would, with an equal solemnity drawn from years of service in a Jewish household, warn me of the awful punishment that awaited a boy who would so desecrate the Sabbath.

My browsings in books were often broken by an afternoon journey in the mule cars to Frascati, with its beach bordering on the Bay, where sandpiles and fiddler crabs were the chief objectives once we had passed the old Confederate earthworks that had been thrown up in the last attempt to save the city from the Yankees.

And later, after Grandpa had purchased a horse and barouche, there was the afternoon drive down the shell road along the Bay, through groves of giant magnolias and live oaks festooned with Spanish moss. Fanned by a breeze redolent of salt-tanged bay and magnolias, regaled on special occasions with food and drink when he came to Fredericks at the end of the drive, I would come home fully convinced that I lived in a wonderful world where I could love and be loved and all was "right as right could be."

And it *was* a good world. I could sit on my own front porch and hear the minister in the Methodist Church across the street thunder the special horrors of hell that yawned for the evil doer. And, further up St. Francis Street, I could sit on my grandfather's back porch and hearken to the minister in the Baptist Church next door proclaim his version of salvation and damnation. On my way to school I would pass the Catholic Cathedral with *"Janua Coeli"* inscribed over the portal; and I soon learned that the Latin phrase meant the same as the Hebrew *"Shaarai Shomayim,"* the Gates of Heaven, the name of our Jewish congregation.

It was a little later that I made one of the warmest friendships of my life with Gardiner L. Tucker, who lived and died an Episcopalian rector, even as his father, Gardiner C. Tucker, had done before him. There followed many hours in the rectory of St. John's, with my friend's father speaking of the law and the gospels. And, though my own Sabbath school training made me deeply conscious of my Jewishness and my home life emphasized it by ritual observance of Reform Judaism, the variety of my religious contacts in these very early years implanted the conviction that all religions were good if, as I naturally believed, mine was somewhat the best.

THEN came the day when I graduated from Cousin Katie's tuition to enter on the sterner curriculum of the public school. Fronting on the wide expanse of Government Street stood the white-columned structure of Barton Academy. Its eastern half housed the girls' school under the tutelage of Electra Semmes Colson, daughter of the great Confederate admiral. The tradition of the ante-Appomattox days remained unchanged under the guidance of this patrician and learned woman.

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The Northern half contained the senior classes for boys. In the rear on Conti Street was one building for the junior grade and one for the high school. I entered the junior grade and there for the first time encountered the mystery of anti-Semitism. I was, so I believed, a good boy. I was a patriotic American, and my uncle had surely earned for my family a deserved reputation for loyalty to Alabama. My father had close Christian friends. I treasure still the silver cup which had been given to me as the first-born of a member of the Order of Myths, one of the societies responsible for those Mardi Gras pageants which gave Mobile the proud title of "Mother of Mystics." Membership in that order gave a sense of "belonging" in a common fellowship. I had indeed heard that neither my father nor any other Jew could join the Athlestane Club, but that was something remote from everyday life. So that day when the "Goubil Gang" bloodied my nose on the astounding theory that I was a "Christ Killer" is burnt into my memory as an unintelligible *dies irae*.

It was the earliest in a long series of bloodied noses, both physical and metaphorical, that have marked the life of myself and every other American Jew. And, as I still puzzle today over the why and the wherefore of this amazing phenomenon in free America, I experience the same sense of bewilderment that came over me when I backed up against the fence on Conti Street and tried to trade blow for blow with René Goubil and his followers. I sensed then, as I have since come to know, that at least one of my missions in life would be to do all in my power to destroy this ugly excrescence on the American way of life.

There have been compensations in the comradeship of many Christian friends. But none of them can ever know, I believe, the poignant grief, the self-consciousness, the hindrance to free intercourse that stems from this cancer and from their failure, inexplicable to me, to excise it ruthlessly by action instead of condoning it, at least in part, by inaction.

The years passed. The afternoons on the bayshore gave way to afternoons on the wharves. There I watched the paddle-wheel river boats echoing to the song of Negro deck hands as they unloaded the cotton; the trim steamers discharging cargoes of bananas into waiting freight cars on the dock; the fishing schooners and the oyster boats; the great many-masted sailing ships that still came in from faraway lands, emitting odors of resin and tar. On those wharves the boy saw visions of distant shores and a great, unknown world and the romance of life that lay beyond the confines of the home town.

From the junior grade I entered the senior class of Barton Academy on Government Street, and went from there on into the high school division. After the lapse of fifty years, I can still recall vividly the personality of every one of my teachers. In the lower grade there was Sarah Zelnicker, a gentle, sweet, and efficient woman, with a sympathetic understanding of small-boy psychology; but she imperiled my standing mightily one day by the bestowal of a maternal kiss as school was dismissed. It took me a long time to live that down among my schoolmates.

In the senior class, I came to know the sterner stuff of human nature in the personality of John D. Yerby. We had discipline under him. The ominous sentence of "2 in deportment and reported to the room" still represents to me the climax of terror. I do not know whether that language is still intelligible to the Mobile of today. To us of the 1880's it meant that our record was sullied with two bad marks in deportment, accompanied by a session in the room after school hours, at which time the strap fell none too gently on the outstretched hand. We were taught there to do our work. That senior department had the virtues of the horse-and-buggy days, even if it had some of their defects, and I shall never cease to believe that the virtues outweighed the defects. It was the fashion of the time to read and study two English classics. We studied them in such a way that through all these years the lovely words of Goldsmith's "Deserted Village" course spontaneously through my mind and the rounded balance and eloquence of Macaulay's "Essay on Warren Hastings" affect to this day, though unconsciously, whatever I write or speak. The essay brought the breath of life to such characters as Georgiana Duchess of Devonshire, Fox, Sheridan, Burke, and the Indian Princes. Its reading gave me my first inkling of an historical sense. Our instruction under Mr. Yerby was a thorough drill. We had to know what was

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knowable and to learn our lessons. Yet I still vision Mr. Yerby's face breaking into a smile which showed that beneath his austerity there lurked a kindliness and understanding that made us boys like him even though we stood in awe of him.

In the high school the old principal was Benjamin S. Woodcock. His habit was to make us relate the things we studied to the life he lived and knew. We read Xenophon's *Anabasis* in Greek. Xenophon's army never marched "two stations" or "four parasangs" without a discourse from Mr. Woodcock describing how his brigade in the Civil War executed a similar maneuver, but much more skillfully. Those who follow the counsel of perfection may object that we learned more about that Alabama brigade than we did about the Greek army. But this I know, that Xenophon under him became human and the soldiers of the Greek army real men, and the battles real battles, and when the sea at last was reached, it had much the same aspect of actuality as the Gulf of Mexico from the shore of nearby Dauphin Island

Head of them all was Mr. Dickson, superintendent of schools. I wonder now if the old engine room which he set up to the northeast of the main building still exists. I hope it does, for to us boys it was the supreme privilege to be detailed in groups of two or three to go to that room in the afternoon and there learn the wonders of physics. And we had our chemistry, too, developed to an astounding extent for a secondary school. There was a good and serviceable laboratory in which we advanced through qualitative to quantitative analysis, and the work was so well done that when I entered Columbia I could pass the course required of freshmen or sophomores and was allowed to substitute an advanced course in chemistry. He had a real passion for fostering the instruction of the young in the natural sciences.

With the strands of this secular training were intertwined those of religious education. Our family was not piously orthodox, but it was observant. It was my proud duty as oldest grandchild on the first night of Passover to read in the seder service the age-old questions: "Wherefore is this night distinguished from all other nights?" "Wherefore on this night do we eat only unleavened bread, whereas on other nights we eat bread either leavened or unleavened?"

On Friday nights we broke the Sabbath bread while my father invoked the traditional blessing. And, though we did not fast on the Day of Atonement, we did spend the day in the synagogue.

As I reached my teens, I passed under the influence of an inspired rabbi who deeply influenced my future course of life.

This rabbi of my adolescent years died an untimely death as a very young man. His name, Oscar J. Cohen, is unknown today. But after I have passed my three-score-and-ten, I still thrill as I remember the glee with which I celebrated, under his tutelage, the Maccabean Victories, the delight I had when Haman was caught in his own toils, the sense of glory I felt in Miriam's Song of Triumph. But much more than to the glory of these merely historical phases of our Jewish life and tradition, I warm to the recollection of my response as I sat there, in our little synagogue, with the windows open and the sunlight streaming in. When I heard the choir intone "Lift up your heads, oh ye gates," I felt that the gates of the Ark were really lifting themselves up, as Rabbi Cohen took out the scrolls of the Law from which to read the morning lesson. He gave me a sense of immanence of a divine spirit, firing me with a glow that made me Jew through and through, loving my religion and its traditions. He made me a sincere Jew who tried always to carry his Judaism into every act of his daily life. He greatly influenced my secular education, but his priceless gift was to my soul. This is the great function and opportunity of a rabbi. It is obscured sometimes today by the growing tendency of many rabbis to emphasize the secular phases of Jewish life. A similar tendency shows itself among the clergy of other faiths. Oscar Cohen was exemplar of the faith that the rabbi's true duty was to further "the things that are God's."

Yet Rabbi Cohen also shaped my future beyond the limits of religious influence. I was graduated from high school in 1892. A Columbia man himself, he persuaded my father that a metropolitan college was the best place for a Southern boy. I had relatives in New York with whom I might live. In the summer of that year, I came to the city that was to become my future home. A few hours of tutoring had added somewhat to my scant preparation.

In October, 1892, I was admitted to Columbia—with heavy "conditions"!

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

THE PIOUS CAT

A Fable

Y. L. PERETZ

Y. L. PERETZ (1851-1915) was one of the most important influences in the emergence of a major secular Jewish literary tradition in the second half of the 19th century. He was born in Zamosc, Poland, and began his literary career by writing poetry and articles in Hebrew. After some years, he also began to write in Yiddish; and in this language he produced poetry, articles, short stories, folk tales, plays, and many educational articles in which he tried to bring contemporary developments in science, economics, and the like to the attention of East European Jews. After some years as a lawyer in Zamosc, he settled in Warsaw in the 1880's: and here he became the guide and teacher of a whole generation of Yiddish writers (his position in Warsaw is sharply etched in "Peretz at Home," by J. J. Trunk, in the March 1950 COMMENTARY). When Peretz died in Warsaw in 1915, one hundred thousand Jews came to his funeral.

THE parable printed below was first published in 1906, and appears in his collected writings under the title *"Di Frume Katz."* At the time it appeared, it is most likely that it was taken as a parable of the relations between the Czarist government of "Holy Mother Russia" and its Jewish population. Like most parables, however, many meanings can be read into it. The translation from the Yiddish is by David Klein.—ED.

THREE songbirds successively occupied the same cage, and each in turn succumbed to the cat.

It was no ordinary cat. She was a truly, sincerely pious soul. It was not in vain that she wore her white, orthodox gabardine, and owned those little eyes which reflected the light of heaven.

It was a pious, a strictly observant cat. Ten times a day she washed herself, and she ate her food quietly, somewhere out of the way, in a little corner. All day she would pick up odd morsels of a milky nature; and only after the night had set in would she eat flesh—clean, kosher mouse-flesh.

Nor did she hasten to the feast, like a greedy, vulgar thing. She did not snatch and swallow, as gluttons do, but went about it gently, playfully. . . . Let the poor little mouse live another moment; and another moment—let it dance about a bit; let it get over its trembling—give it a chance to repeat the Confession—a pious cat doesn't grab.

When the first bird was brought into the room she felt compassion for it; her heart was wrung.

"Such a beautiful creature," she sighs, "such a wee thing, such a joy-inspiring little bird, to be without the hope of paradise!

"And it cannot enter paradise"—the cat is sure of that—"First of all, it washes itself in Gentile fashion—with its whole body in the basin.

"In the next place, the very fact that it has been set in a cage proves that it is an evil being, although so young, so sweet, and such a fine singer—proves that it believes more in dynamite than in the Law. And what about the singing itself: that unrestrained singing, that whistling—and that impudent staring right into the sky—and that tearing to get out of the cage, into the sinful world, to the free air, the open window?

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"Has anybody ever seen a cat in a cage, or heard a pious cat whistle so? And what a pity!" weeps the warm heart of the pious cat. "Still it is a living thing, a precious soul, a spark from on high."

The cat's eyes fill with tears. "And it's all because the sinful body is so fair—hence this world is so merry and the Tempter so strong. How can such a tiny, sweet little bird stand up against the great, terrible Tempter? And the longer it lives, the more it sins, and the greater will be the punishment. Ha!"

And a sacred fire flared up in the cat—the fire of Pincus, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the Priest, and she sprang upon the table where the cage with the songbird was standing, and—

Feathers are fluttering about the room.

THE cat was whipped. She accepted the whipping without protest; she piously sobbed and mewed a doleful *al het* ["I have sinned . . . "]. She would not sin again.

The shrewd cat understands why she was whipped. Never would she earn the lash again. She was whipped (the cat understands) because she sent feathers flying about the room, because she left blood-stains upon the white embroidered tablecloth. Such a deed must be accomplished thoroughly, quietly, and piously—not a feather must flutter; not a drop of blood must fall.

So, when the second songbird was bought and left in the room, she throttled it quietly and neatly, and swallowed it feathers and all.

THE cat was thrashed.

Then first the cat understood that it was not a matter of feathers, nor of blood-stains on the tablecloth. The secret is that we must not kill; that we must love and forgive—that not through the *Beth Din's* four modes of execution is the sinful world improved. We must do our best to reform a sinner; we must chide, appeal to the heart. A mere canary, of it is repentant, can rise to an elevation to which even the most pious cat cannot attain.

And the cat feels her heart swelling with joy. No more of the bad, old, unhappy days! No more spilling of blood! Compassion, compassion, and again compassion!

AND with compassion she approached the third canary.

"Don't get frightened," she said in the softest voice that ever came from the throat of a cat—"you are indeed sinful, yet I will not hurt you, for I have compassion for you. I will not even open your cage; I will not even touch you.

"You are silent? Very good. Rather than sing insolent songs, it is better to be silent.

"You tremble in anguish? Still better. Tremble, tremble my child; but not before me; before the Almighty tremble; before His loving Name.

"Oh, that you might stay thus—still, pure and trembling. I will help you to tremble. From my pious soul I will breathe upon you serenity, sweetness, and piety. With my breath shall righteousness enter into your body, the fear of the Lord into your little bones, repentance and remorse into your little heart."

And the cat is beginning to feel how good it is to forgive; what a joy it is with one's breath to blow piety and uprightness into another. Now swells the most pious heart of the most pious cat.

Only, the canary cannot breathe in the cat's atmosphere—it is stifled.

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ON THE HORIZON

ANTI-SEMITISM IN SOCIALISM

SAMUEL GRINGAUZ

SINCE the touchstone that Jewish thought has not infrequently applied to any political or social movement is the movement's attitude toward anti-Semitism, the appearance at this time of a distinct anti-Socialist bias among certain Jewish thinkers is not surprising. *Anti-Semitism in the French Labor Movement* by Z. Szajkowski (published in Yiddish by the author, New York, 1948) is a prime example, especially when taken with some recent articles by the same author ("Socialist Antisemitism in Algeria" in *Jewish Social Studies*, July 1948; "The Jewish Saint-Simonians and Socialist Antisemites in France," *Jewish Social Studies*, January 1947). The factors that prompt this altered Jewish judgment are not far to seek. The British Labor government, as defender of what is left of the British Empire, has opposed Jewish nationalism's will to establish a Jewish state. In an atmosphere charged with the after-affects of the annihilation of six million Jews, the mean-spirited and stupid policy of Bevinism thus becomes the occasion for a Jewish political attack on socialism as a whole.

Ostensibly *Anti-Semitism in the French Labor Movement* is a historical survey of French socialist literature in the 19th century —but Mr. Szajkowski does not conceal the fact that his target is elsewhere. He writes: "Many readers will regard the facts I have cited as simply representing the tactics of a section of the socialists, tactics indeed that have done the Jews considerable harm, but nevertheless merely tactics and not outright anti-Semitism—just as the Bevin policy represents the tactics of a socialist foreign minister but is in no sense anti-Semitic. It is my contention that all the facts I have cited are not merely symptomatic of bad tactics . . . they constitute anti-Semitism."

Mr. Szajkowski's book, then, attributes a *historical* and *social-ideological* foundation to the transitory policy pursued by some small-minded former trade union leaders in the Labor government, under the influence of experienced and malevolent colonial officials. This, I do not hesitate to say immediately, is sociologically wrong; even more important, it is politically unsound, as it diverts attention from more basic issues.

THE author (who is a member of the Yiddish Scientific Institute in New York) rescues from oblivion a great number of literary documents, forgotten statements, and other facts that will interest specialists. It has been known, for example, that the Fourierists and the Proudhonians exploited anti-Semitic feeling in the interests of their anti-capitalist propaganda, and that Fourierism made use of anti-Semitic arguments in its struggle against Saint-Simonism. The anti-Semitic works of the Fourierist, A. Toussenel (*Les juifs, rois*

RECENTLY, socialism has found itself under attack as anti-Semitic in certain Jewish quarters. How this happens, and what truth there is in the charge, SAMUEL GRINGAUZ attempts here to discover; and in tracing the connection of anti-Semitism with socialism he offers a suggestive generalization on the relationship to anti-Semitism of all political movements. Mr. Gringauz was born in 1900 in what was then East Prussia, and studied economics, law, and philosophy at Koenigsberg, Bern, and Karlsruhe, and in Russia, Italy, and France. After his liberation from a German concentration camp, he was president of the Congress and Council of Liberated Jews in the US zone of Germany. Mr. Gringauz is now living in the United States and is engaged in social science research. This article was translated from the German by Martin Greenberg.

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de l'époque, 1845); of the Proudhonian, Georges Duchêne (*L'empire industriel,* 1896); of the socialist, Auguste Chirac (*Les rois de la république*); of the Bakuninist, Gustav Tridon (*Le molochisme juif,* 1884); of the Belgian socialist, Edmond Picard; and of others—all this has been well known and cited. But Mr. Szajkowski's work reminds us, in addition, that such leading socialist periodicals as *La Revue Socialiste, Le Socialiste,* and *La Petite République* lent their support to anti-Semitic literature; that many of the leading socialists were sympathetic to the work of Edouard Drumont, founder of modern anti-Semitism; that noted socialists and labor leaders conducted anti-Semitic campaigns. Nor did we know of the anti-Semites among the early Communards until Mr. Szajkowski discovered them for us; of the anti-Semitic tinge in the utterances of such leaders of the Marxist wing of the French socialists as Jules Guesde, Paul Lafargue, A. Zevaes, and of their opposition to the fight to clear Dreyfus (it should be borne in mind, however, that this opposition was not consciously anti-Semitic, but was based on Marxist principle, and was shared by some Jewish socialists as well—as, for example, Philipp Kranz of the New York Yiddish newspaper *Abendblatt*); of the anti-Semitic demonstrations of the anarchist A. F. H. Hammon; of the close collaboration of the well-known socialist, K. R. Severine, with Drumont; of the long-standing violent socialist anti-Semitism in Algeria; of the anti-Semitism of René Viviani; of the anti-Dreyfus attitude displayed by most of the French socialist leaders—including Jaurès—in the first years of the Dreyfus Affair; and of many other things.

Valuable as this research of Mr. Szajkowski's may be, it opens no new doors to an understanding of the essence of modern anti-Semitism. That there has existed, in Western Europe, a psychological affinity between socialist and anti-Semitic feeling is a fact that has long been noticed. August Bebel called anti-Semitism the "socialism of fools." At the close of the 19th century, the well-known sociologist Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu wrote: "Anti-Semitism ends up in a kind of anti-capitalism and, consequently, in a kind of socialism. On this level anti-Semitism joins hands with socialism and arrives at the same conclusions. . . . Thus anti-Semitism ends up in socialism, a socialism of the Right. . . . All those whose hopes in life have been disappointed, all those whose incomes are inferior to their appetites find consolation in having for a live target a circumscribed group of people against whom the anger of the masses, with all their rancors and resentments, can be directed" (*Les doctrines de haine,* Paris, 1902).

Just as socialism in many instances used anti-Semitic slogans to win over the masses (in 19th-century France, especially, and in a particularly brazen fashion in Algeria), so too anti-Semitism used socialist appeals to win the masses over to its own side. The famous anti-Semitic ideologist Drumont called this "the social function of anti-Semitism." This affinity between socialism and anti-Semitism later found expression in fascist ideology, whose strongest roots lay in Drumont's "national socialism" and in the anti-intellectual, anti-capitalist theories enunciated by such ideologists as Georges Sorel, Vilfredo Pareto, Georges Valois, and others.

It is significant that anti-Semitic aberrations almost always manifested themselves, not at the center, but on the periphery of the socialist movement. With the end of the Dreyfus Affair and the creation of a single socialist party in 1905 (the SFIO), French socialism definitively renounced all anti-Semitic leanings, as did all the other great mass parties of organized socialism. Since then anti-Semitism has played no role in the official movement. All the socialist parties have condemned anti-Semitism in their formal pronouncements and they have regarded anti-Semitic activity as cause for expulsion. It is true that people outside the official socialist parties have called themselves socialists and carried on anti-Semitic propaganda; and that such men as Marcel Déat, Henrik DeMan, and Jacques Doriot served their political apprenticeships in socialist parties only to adhere later to fascist and Nazi ideology. But it is not easy to see how socialism can be held responsible for them.

ANTI-SEMITISM has gone through several stages in the course of time. Once its chief source was religious fanaticism and the legacy of feelings it left behind. Then it became chiefly political, and testified to a hostility to liberalism and rationalism. In the present postwar period, however, anti-Semi-

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tism has lost its specific connection with political reaction and acquired more of a mass-psychological character. At the same time, the outlines of a new kind of anti-Semitism may be emerging, one that has its roots in the clash of Jewish national aspirations with the foreign policies pursued by the statesmen of certain countries.

It would, however, be a complete mistake, because a country whose foreign policy is in conflict with the Jews happens to have a government of a certain kind, to draw conclusions as to the character of the general political movement of which that government is a part; just as in general it would be a mistake to describe certain political parties as anti-Semitic or philo-Semitic "on principle." The fact is that neither liberalism, nor socialism, nor fascism is anti-Semitic, *on principle*. All depends on the moral force and strength of character exercised by the particular party leadership in the concrete circumstances of time and place—that is, it depends on whether the leadership of a party has sufficient moral courage and strength of tradition to forego awakening and exploiting base emotions by anti-Semitic slander and whether it has the courage, too, to condemn such slander when it comes from the opposition.

MANY books have been written on anti-Semitism, and many causes have, with more or less correctness, been assigned to it. But one thing cannot be disputed—anti-Semitism springs from an artificial, not a natural impulse; it is never begotten of itself alone, and it is always the product of suggestion and incitation. Anti-Semitism is not a political movement but a political weapon. Anti-Semitism has never been an ideology or a moral principle in itself, but always a provocation aiming at certain entirely practical ends in the service of a larger cause. In periods of religious fanaticism, it was propagated by religious leaders as a means of strengthening their hold on the masses. In succeeding ages it was used to discredit liberal capitalism and stir the populace against it. The French socialists used anti-Semitism as a means to win over the masses, and they personified capitalism in Rothschild; the Fourierists used it to discredit Saint-Simonism. To discredit their socialist and Marxist opponents, Bakunin and his followers did not stop at anti-Semitism. To discredit socialism in the United States, anti-Semitic feelings were stirred up against its followers. Atheistic socialists and followers of modern paganism even tried to rouse anti-Semitic emotions against Christianity itself by calling it a product of Judaism (e.g. Alfred Rosenberg's *Myth of the 20th Century*). Pierre Hervé, too, co-editor of the Communist newspaper *l'Humanité*, wishing to discredit his political opponents, the socialists, could not refrain from anti-Semitic allusions (*La libération trahie*, 1945).

Nor was even Nazi anti-Semitism by any means a philosophical principle or an innate psychological attribute. It too was the product of cold calculation. Hitler confessed to his friend Rauschning: "The Jews are a valuable hostage given to me by the democracies. Anti-Semitic propaganda in all countries is an almost indispensable medium of the extension of our political campaign." And Julius Streicher, the most brutal exponent of Nazi anti-Semitism, was never more candid than when he said in the Hercules Halle in Nuremberg on April 21, 1932: "The German worker can be won *only* if these words are continually hammered into him—the Jews are our misfortune." Joseph Goebbels, in a circular to his propaganda department dated October 29, 1942, stated point-blank that anti-Jewish agitation was the sole means of winning over the Russian population and that the Fuehrer was staking everything on it.

For the Jewish understanding of this problem, it is essential to recognize that no political tendency is by its nature anti-Semitic or anti-anti-Semitic; that different things can follow according to the moral level and practical judgment shown by different political leaderships at different times and in different places (Italian fascism, Rumanian liberalism, British socialism). It follows also, of course, that if socialism is by no means anti-Semitic "on principle," it is not on the other hand intrinsically immune to anti-Semitism. But the basic fact should not be obscured: whether in socialism or in any other political movement, anti-Semitism is never primary, it is always secondary. It is never the cause, but a weapon enlisted in the service of a cause.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

THE "BREAK-UP" OF THE AMERICAN FAMILY

Not a Dying, But an Evolving Institution

DENNIS H. WRONG

THE "break-up" of the family has become a perennial theme of American sociologists. It is one with which they are sure to enlist the interest of laymen, harried as everyone is by the problems of relations with the opposite sex, marriage and divorce, and having and raising children. For the last two decades at least, they have warned us that the family is "losing its functions," and that the home is becoming little more than a hotel for its members. They have accumulated the statistics on divorce, bastardy, marital misery, and juvenile delinquency, and they habitually use such drastic terms as "disappearance," "disintegration," and "degeneration" to characterize the condition of the family today. Projects for restoring and "revitalizing" family life are legion among sociologists.

The family whose break-up is thus heralded is the traditional monogamous and patriarchal family of Western civilization. Sociologists point out that this family, developed for the most part in a rural environment, had economic, educational, and recreational functions which it has now relinquished to large business enterprises, schools, and the mass entertainment industries. In just about all the historical civilizations and primitive societies with which we are acquainted, the family has been both the basic economic unit and the major educational agency for its youth. Having lost these functions, what will hold it together?

The modern urban family, the standard sociological critique continues, is held together only by the individual needs of its members. Our socio-economic order does not depend to the extent it once did on the stability and solidarity of the family, and consequently exercises less control over people's domestic lives. The pressures of economic necessity and communal censure no longer play much role in binding the individual to the family group. Sex, marriage, and bearing and raising children are becoming private affairs to be settled by individual decisions at individual convenience rather than by the institutional regulations of law and religion or by the "unwritten law" of accepted codes and mores.

THIS critique is now to be found in the discussions of marriage and the family in most of the better textbooks, as well as in the sociological works written specifically on the subject. In such texts we will generally find a historical account of the family in pre-industrial Western society and ethnological data on the kinship systems of primitive peoples—and there may be an effort to classify the modern family according to its formal institutional attributes as monogamous, conjugal, patronymic, multilineal, patrilocal, etc. We will also find typologies constructed to indicate the main distinctions between the modern family and earlier forms.

FOR more than a decade newspaper writers—after quoting sociologists—have described the break-up of the American family. But of late—at least on the academic level—a new note is beginning to be heard among the sociologists, somewhat less alarmist, and suggesting that what we may be witnessing (and living through) in the American family is not necessarily a single one-way trend, headed inevitably downward. Here DENNIS H. WRONG, instructor in sociology at Princeton University, discusses some of the most recent developments in thinking in this field. Mr. Wrong was born in Canada in 1923, and attended the University of Toronto and Columbia University.

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Thus, Carle Zimmerman (*The Family of Tomorrow,* Harper, 1949) discerns three basic family types and contrasts the "atomistic" modern family with the "trustee" and "domestic" families of the past. It is clear what *he* thinks of the modern family. Ernest Burgess and H. J. Locke, the authors of the most widely used text on marriage and the family (*The Family,* American Book, 1945), use a more neutral terminology, and distinguish between the "institutional" family of the past, "with family behavior controlled by the mores, public opinion, and law," and the "companionship" family of the present, in which "behavior is determined by the affection and consensus of its members."

This analysis has led rather naturally to an emphasis on empirical studies of "success and failure" in marriage—undertaken with the explicit and implicit hope that they would give guidance to efforts to help stem the tide of disintegration. These studies have involved elaborate statistical investigations of given samples of married couples to find out which type gets divorced ("failure") and which type stays married ("success"), and they reach such conclusions as: marriages have a better chance of success when the bride is virgin and fifteen pounds underweight, when the groom lives in the suburbs, when both are devoutly religious, and when neither is particularly interested in politics. The results of these studies generally lend themselves easily to use by textbook writers and advice-to-the-lovelorn columnists as authoritative scientific evidence to back up their warnings against violating traditional precepts.

OF LATE, however, this main line of sociological writing and thinking on the American family has been under attack by sociologists who have taken to heart the more recent developments in anthropology and psychiatry. For one thing, these critics object that to use such terms as "disintegration" and "disappearance" in speaking of the modern family only indicates a nostalgic and unscientific preference for one type of family—the family of our rural past, which in any case cannot be restored in modern industrial society. More radical critics have also suggested that it is equally nostalgic and unscientific to consider divorce a sign of "social pathology" and the continuance of marriage a sign of "social health": we must consider the functions and meanings of marriage and divorce in different social contexts. Because the family pattern of today is different from that of an earlier day is no evidence, *per se,* that it is worse; it may be better, if it works better for its members and society in terms of present needs and considerations. Conceivably a society can be perfectly happy and adjusted with a very high rate of divorce.

These critics are also unimpressed by the typologies constructed by the sociologists of the family: these, they suggest, too often give the illusion of analytic depth to what is merely low-grade description blended with inadequate conceptions of causal relationship; their evaluative overtones give away the fact that it is prejudgments that are operating, rather than an objective effort to trace basic connections. For example, Burgess and Locke list just about every conceivable influence on sexual behavior in the last twenty years, from the automobile and avant-garde literature to urbanization, and assert that the decline of Puritan taboos is the result of the "combination of all these converging factors." But what was responsible for this miraculous "convergence"? How can one blithely mix causes on all levels of abstraction? Does such a proliferation of causes indicate real grasp or lead to better understanding?

In short, the critics of the classic American sociology of the family object to the failure to face the fundamental relation between developments in the family and developments in the rest of the society, a failure covered up by the manufacture of terminologies and the accumulation of hosts of "factors" and "causes."

THIS is the position of the "functional sociologists": the school of sociological thinking led by Talcott Parsons of Harvard and Robert Merton of Columbia. Their ideological orientation derives from the leading ideas of the fathers of sociology—Durkheim, Pareto, Weber—modified somewhat by an interest in contemporary anthropology and psychoanalytic psychiatry. The "functional" in the name of their school refers to their emphasis on the *function* of any social institution—the role it plays in the larger society, rather than its conformity to some earlier pattern or traditional social or moral value. Thus, they would be very chary of speaking of divorce as a sign of social pathology; rather, they would point out that divorce locks in with these social and these emoticnal problems in our present-day society, permits the release of these tensions, and so on: leaving us with the unstated conclusion that if we reduce divorce, something else (which moralists may

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find equally unpleasant) will take its place.

From anthropology — particularly from the "functional" anthropology of Malinowski, pursued in this country by such well-known writers as Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead — they take the point of view of seeing any problem against the background of possible behaviors in all societies, including primitive societies; and a strong awareness of what is possible supports their effort to free themselves from value judgments. (So, for example, knowing that some societies allow premarital sexual freedom, some post-marital sexual freedom, some both, and some neither, G. P. Murdock, an anthropologist from Yale, finds it easy to suggest an active effort to eliminate our sexual taboos.) From psychoanalytic psychiatry and psychology the functional sociologists take the emphasis on the subtle interrelationship of a variety of life-history factors in producing some psychological result, and this, too, supports their opposition to the listing of unintegrated causes.

Functional sociology does not yet have the impressive list of works — texts, studies, and popular writings — on marriage and the family that the older approach to the sociology of the family has piled up. But when we look at such a volume as *The Family: Its Function and Destiny* (edited by Ruth Nanda Anshen, Harper, 1949) we see that the functional sociologists, with their anthropological and psychiatric allies, have almost completely crowded out the older writers on the sociology of the family, and are given sizable scope in which to develop their distinctive point of view.

Let us look first at the lengthy and impressive article in which Professor Parsons tries to show how the family is integrated with the larger social structures of American society. Professor Parsons takes certain formal features of the American family, particularly the fact that one is allowed a free choice of a marriage partner and that there are no kinship regulations closely tying members of the immediate conjugal family with relatives outside it, and shows how they conform to the requirements of our occupational system and class structure. For example, the absence of large and cohesive kin groups like the primitive clan or the Chinese ancestral line permits individuals to be highly mobile occupationally; their background and their family loyalty do not hold them back. And our loose kinship ties also check the possibility of nepotism, which would violate the impersonal evaluation of individual merit on which the more efficient and more democratic occupational system of the United States rests.

Professor Parsons thus ingeniously demonstrates the "functional interdependence" of the family and the other major institutions of American society. However, in order to present his picture of a highly articulated and systematically inter-related network of institutions, he is forced to assume that the units he is relating to one another are fairly stable. For example, he makes much of the difference between the male role as jobholder and economic provider and the female role as housewife and mother, taking her status from her husband. But he must concede that "there are strong tendencies in the United States towards identical treatment of the sexes." However, ignoring the broad implications of this admission, he then says that the difference in roles is *necessary* in order to preserve the solidarity of the family, because if husband and wife both worked, their job statuses might differ and this would impose serious competitive strains on the marriage relationship. This argument rather neatly links sex roles to the occupational system, but, even if its far-fetched character is ignored, it completely overlooks the fact that married women *do* work, and in increasing numbers. Married women, in all classes, now make up a considerable percentage of the total labor force, and there is clearly other evidence as well that sex roles in America are changing. How then can it be "necessary," if the whole system is to keep on working, that women should *not* work?

Professor Parsons' failure to stress present-day changes in sex roles leads to the main point that can be made against the newer, anthropologically influenced efforts to understand the American family: their concentration on efforts to detect in Americans' behavior the patterns and norms of an "American" culture, parallel to the culture of a primitive tribe, is misplaced. It seems to me that the urbanization and mechanization of American life, now in the process of steamrolling traditional values and modes of conduct out of existence, make it impossible to speak with real precision any more of static "culture patterns" or "social norms" governing the sphere of family life. There is no question that the older patterns and norms are severely shaken; but I doubt whether many new ones have emerged in any crystallized fashion, and certainly no total overall system, worthy of being called a culture, is as yet apparent.

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If we look at a few of the subjects sociologists regularly deal with in their discussions of the family, we will see that the difficulties involved in pinning down present-day norms and patterns of family behavior are, by comparison with primitive societies, enormous.

COURTSHIP: The term itself evokes anachronistic images of the chaperons, horsehair sofas, stammering proposals, and chaste first kisses after betrothal that were at one time required by a clearly formulated code. We do not need Kinsey to tell us that it is no longer followed by most people, although, with minor modifications, it remains the "official morality" promulgated by the organs of mass communication, upheld by Dorothy Dix, and transmitted by most middle-class parents to their children. Here the voice of Puritanism, the Victorian era, and the rural farm family—not to mention Catholic and Jewish education—still speaks. Its growing irrelevance to actual behavior gives it the status of an "ideal pattern" rather than a "real pattern," to use the language of the anthropologists.

The relaxed censorship standards of Hollywood and the publishing industry, the popularity of such books as the Kinsey report, and the spread of popular psychiatry with its promotion of "sexual adjustment" as an ideal plus the idea that "sexual frustration" is unhealthy, indicate that values are changing. The most marked trend in sexual behavior within the last generation unearthed by the Kinsey statistics is the growing sexual independence of unmarried women. At the very least, there seems to be an increasing acceptance of pre-marital sex relations and a more general awareness of almost universal participation in the erotic life.

Looking at the middle class alone, we see that the majority still probably adhere to a secularized Puritanism which uneasily co-exists with the "having-a-good-time" attitude nurtured by the entertainment industries. Some groups countenance pre-marital sex relations, but only after betrothal; to others the "affair" is an accepted type of pre-marital relationship (and often extra-marital as well); and there are still those who regard a "Bohemian revolt" demanding virtual promiscuity as the essence of modernity. Everything from sheer "having fun" to the orgiastic philosophy of Wilhelm Reich is invoked to justify this variety of behavior. Only in the educated, "liberal" sector of the metropolitan middle class do we find that new values are systematized to any degree. It is here that psychiatry becomes the basis for a new ethic governing sexual conduct (and not infrequently *all* conduct).

The individual often is caught in this confusion and profusion of values, and must fall back upon himself for canons of personal conduct. Who is so lonely as the adolescent girl wondering if she has become a "loose" woman by submitting to her lover, and finding no unanimous community opinion to answer her either negatively or affirmatively? Or the boy responding to the value placed by his male companions on "having an affair" while remaining deeply unconvinced of his right to make sexual demands on girls of his own social status? No wonder attempts to establish an ethic based solely on analysis of the biological and psychological nature of the individual are so popular. A great deal of the intense interest which Americans have in psychoanalysis is due simply to its revelation of what Lionel Trilling has called "a community of sexuality."

The sociologists are hardly consistent with one another in their efforts to extract generalizations from this chaos of shifting standards. Carle Zimmerman, a belligerent traditionalist, thunderously denounces America's "Voice of the Turtle sexual ethics," while those influenced by psychoanalysis continue to speak as if they were engaged in storming the last bastion of Puritanism in the modern world. And these conflicting positions are supported by empirical studies of different segments of American social reality. These writers may accurately characterize certain groups; but they fail to stress the significance of the existence side by side of so many *different* norms for sexual conduct. The demonstration that widely different norms do exist is certainly one of the most significant findings of the Kinsey report. For it is this bewildering diversity of values which is primary to the situation confronted by middle-class Americans growing up in the larger cities today. Not only do they face a variety of possible patterns in their own world, but in social mobility and migration they become aware of new ranges of patterns characteristic of different classes. Surely it is an instance of what Durkheim called "anomie," of the breakdown of norms, that condition which under the more familiar label of "alienation" is recognized as oppressing all of us.

The sociologists would seem to have overworked the concept of "culture." Modern life

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cannot be fitted into the frames of uniform "culture patterns," and the attempt to force a fit often results in neglect of basic features of *social structure*—the objective realities, such as the need to make a living in a certain social system, which enforce a certain type of behavior regardless of pre-existing norms, values, and social rituals. One of the outstanding characteristics of the modern world is, in fact, the destruction of culture by sweeping changes in social structure. The adjustment to modern industry and modern cities wrecks the complicated and varied cultural patterns built up in the American rural hinterland, or in European villages. Edward Sapir, the late Yale anthropologist, suggested this a long time ago when he distinguished between the "genuine" culture of older societies and the "spurious" culture of an industrialized world.

MARRIAGE: We have already pointed out that a major focus of empirical study has been the "causes" of marital unhappiness. I believe that an inquiry into *why people get married at all* might prove far more revealing than these usually banal undertakings, but since all writers on the family assume the desirability, or at least the permanence, of the institution of monogamous marriage, no one has posed this question for systematic investigation. It is taken for granted that romantic love, and the desire for emotional security or for sanctioned sexual gratification, induce most people to marry.

These motives seem so self-evident that the radical change in the meaning of marriage which they imply is easily overlooked. For marriage was formerly both an economic necessity and a moral obligation, rather than simply a means of satisfying individual psychological needs. Today marriage no longer confers of itself added standing in the community. It no longer symbolizes the achievement of full status as adult and citizen as it did in rural society. While a vague stigma still clings to the middle-aged bachelor, it does not affect his occupational career and perhaps is based on suspicion of homosexuality rather than on an echo of the conviction that failure to marry constitutes unnatural and immoral shirking of responsibility. The spinster, of course, remains an object of contempt and pity, but this attitude will presumably disappear as differences in sex roles continue to diminish. Indeed, no one takes this attitude even today towards an unmarried woman who has achieved some type of distinction. Again, a variety of possible roles is offered to people where one stood before.

It is asserted by both laymen and sociologists that romantic love is the prime basis for marriage in America. To many it is as uniquely American as baseball or hot dogs. Now romance is linked with youth; it is, as a matter of fact, a primary feature of the American "youth culture." However, the boundaries of this youth culture are being steadily expanded downward to a youthful age level where marriage is quite impossible economically. Originally centered on the college campus, it has diffused, with the creation of high school Greek-letter fraternities modeled on those of the colleges, to late and middle adolescents. And now twelve- and thirteen-year-old "bobby-soxers" are also being brought within its orbit. While the age at which one enters the romance market drops, the age at which one marries has been rising, and, with college education becoming more and more a matter of course, will rise further. The trend towards greater pre-marital sexual freedom also encourages the postponement of marriage and destroys a strong psychological support of romantic love—sexual frustration.

If, as Denis de Rougemont asserts in another essay in the Anshen volume, "it is the very essence of romance to thrive on obstacles, delays, separations, and dreams," it may be that the romantic dramas of the future will be mainly enacted by youngsters in their early teens facing the economic impossibility of marriage, the jeers of older adolescents who have become confirmed sexual realists, and the indifference of adults who have "settled down" to marriage in a matter-of-fact, utilitarian way. Marriage is already looked on by many as "settling down" rather than as full achievement of adult status or as the blissful climax of romance. Perhaps marriage is becoming an escape from romance—from the emotional wear-and-tear of a succession of bouts with love followed by disillusionment, although the high divorce rate would seem to indicate that it is not a very successful escape.

In any case, the reasons why people marry are problematical and may become even more so. Their problematical character is ignored by the sociologists, who concentrate on the reasons why marriages break up. "To marry or not to marry?" is a real question for many people. Or, more accurately, it becomes "whether to marry now or later?" John Levy and Ruth

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Monroe, in their book *The Happy Family*, point out that people frequently rationalize a deep-seated reluctance to marry by finding fault with all prospective partners who present themselves. Freely expressed concern over *whom* to marry conceals the more fundamental doubts about *when* to marry. This would have applied to very few Americans of fifty years ago; indeed, there have been few periods in world history in which the desirability of marriage has been as widely questioned as it is today—though the questioning is as yet indirectly revealed in people's behavior and emotions, rather than in thought and speech.

The 1940 census shows that about 10 per cent of each sex remained unmarried at the age of 45. This figure undoubtedly represents an increase in the number of unmarried people over earlier years; yet it is perhaps equally significant to note that 90 per cent of the population still gets married before early middle age.

CHILDREN: The wish for an heir to perpetuate one's name and status was the strongest male incentive to marriage in aristocratic society; later, children were needed as workers on the farm and in the small business when these were predominantly family enterprises; and motherhood has always been considered woman's crowning achievement in her traditional feminine role. Today it is obvious that emphasis on success as a major life goal, the perils of child-raising stressed by popular psychiatry, the uncertainty of the future, and, finally, the availability of birth-control methods, lessen the meaning and value once associated with the creation of one's own image in the person of an offspring. The ambivalence which middle-class parents, both male and female, have towards raising a family has been fully and ably described by Arnold Green in his article "The Middle Class Male Child and Neurosis" (*American Sociological Review*, February 1946). Having children, like sexual conduct and marriage, is increasingly taken out of the realm of "mores" and "culture patterns" and becomes a matter of individual option.

Child-rearing must inevitably become a focal point for the tensions of social change, for parents can scarcely fail to recognize that the world faced by their children differs considerably from that in which they themselves grew up. Margaret Mead and Geoffrey Gorer both attribute the absence of stable patterns for raising children in the United States to historical causes: the influx into the country of immigrants who were of necessity forced to reject much of their Old World culture in adjusting to life in alien America. They contend that the anxiety felt by immigrant parents bringing up children in a strange country, and the inevitable rejection by the young of their parents' way of life, have somehow been universalized and now characterize even families whose forefathers have lived in America for generations.

But large-scale immigration has ended and a third and a fourth generation of descendants of the immigrants are now growing up. Are we to infer that the attitudes of the immigrant population have "diffused" through the rest of society and mysteriously become part of a unitary American "ethos"? The almost exclusive concern with cultural concepts—in this case the "acculturation" of the foreign-born—leads Mead and Gorer to ignore contemporary socio-economic changes which obliterate traditional values and drive as wide a gap between the second and third generations as that created by immigration between the first and second. Everyone, old American and third-generation immigrant alike, is victimized by this process. There is no need to refer to immigration to explain it. Surely suburban living, commuters' trains, and unglamorous office jobs, leading to the father's absence from home most of the day, have as much to do with the decline of paternal authority as a "pattern" of rejecting fathers ostensibly inherited from the children of the foreign-born. Perhaps second-generation immigrants did originate the pattern, but it has not simply persisted just so: it must have been strengthened by these social trends unrelated to immigration. And in the long run it is more valuable to understand the significance of such trends than the particular historical situation of the immigrant family.

Big city urbanism provides the setting in which child-rearing is viewed as an enterprise fraught with danger, and recourse to the "expert" becomes an almost compulsive response. But science, and particularly a new and undeveloped branch of it, is an unstable authority on which to depend, and it has produced a rapid succession of verdicts on child-rearing over the last two decades. John B. Watson told the mother to sterilize herself emotionally before approaching her child in order to "condition its reflexes" as impersonally as possible. Or better still she shouldn't approach the child at all, but should surrender this archaic privi-

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lege to the behaviorist psychologist. Today Watson is a back number, and the Freudians tell us that the child must have the demonstrative love of the mother. Approved methods of feeding and toilet training have changed even more rapidly. You pick your pediatrician and you get your technique for rearing children.

These trends in sexual behavior, marriage, and child-bearing and rearing all move in the direction of greater freedom of individual choice. Modern life has broken through the rigidity of traditionally prescribed patterns of conduct. Man's emancipation from the last of the trinity of institutions, Church, State, and Family, which dominated him before the Industrial Revolution, is now well under way.

Bourgeois society had guaranteed religious freedom and created the limited, *laissez-faire* state, but as Max Horkheimer, another contributor to the Anshen volume, points out, *families* rather than individuals were liberated from authoritarian institutions. In fact, the Victorian era, the peak of bourgeois liberalism, has come to symbolize familial control and oppression—the domination of woman by man, of children by parents, and of all by a Puritanical moral code. Professor Horkheimer writes: "Man, liberated from serfdom in alien households, became the master in his own. Children, however, for whom the world had been a penitentiary throughout the Middle Ages, continued to be slaves well into the 19th century. When the separation of state and society, of political and private life, was completed, direct personal dependence survived in the home."

Despite the emphasis on democratic living to be found in contemporary sociology, hardly any American student of the family views it as Professor Horkheimer does, from the perspective of the history of human freedom. Seen in this perspective, most of the current negative evaluations become positive. We can, if we wish, see the variety and uncertainty of behavior in "courtship," marriage, and child-raising as indications of the breakdown and disintegration of the family, as in a sense they are. But we can also see these trends as inevitable *expansions of the area of the personal freedom of the individual.* Of course increased freedom means more uncertainty concerning desirable sexual conduct and more divorce, certainly at first and probably forever: but then we must stop hedging and decide what we really mean by individual freedom and how much of it we want.

And even our failure to discover "patterns," "norms," and "rules," equivalent to those described for primitive societies, and earlier stages of Western culture, can be seen positively: it means that the individual is not faced with one or a few fixed courses of development, but has to create a life for himself that combines the old patterns and desires with new possibilities. This is more difficult, emotionally, and creates a confused situation, socially and morally: but what else can freedom mean?

The study of the family can lead us directly to the consideration of the most important questions of freedom and individuality: perhaps the functional sociologists will yet arrive at the discussion of those questions on a high level.

Meanwhile, it should be clear that none of the trends we have described points in any way to the disappearance of the family, nor even to changes in its formal structure. Although by 1945 roughly one in every three marriages ended in divorce, it is estimated that as high as 70 or 80 per cent of the divorcees remarry, which, to say the least, does not indicate a loss of faith in marriage. And in spite of our much publicized falling birth rate, people continue to have children and raise them in the time-honored and traditional place for such functions, the family. In our mass society the ties of marriage and kinship are almost the only stable framework for close personal relationships.

Indeed, the family we have today, with its freedom from extended kinship bonds and from excessive ceremonial, may be considered as better meeting the needs and more appropriately reflecting the spirit of a free, mobile, and individualistic society; Professor Parsons in his essay is well aware of this.

By one of those ironies of history, this accelerating freedom from the authoritarian family comes at a time when totalitarianism menaces freedom in all areas of life. And as Professor Horkheimer shows, this threat is not unrelated to the family: for on the one hand, totalitarianism restores the authority of the family as a means of raising the birth rate and enhancing national power; but on the other, this is a false restoration, for in reality the totalitarian state demands loyalty only to itself, and it destroys all other loyalties, including those that develop within the family. This would seem to be one more piece of evidence that the freer society and the freer family are closely interrelated and interdependent.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Conservatism and Freedom

To the Editor of Commentary:

In the New York *Herald Tribune* of October 9, Professor Crane Brinton notes that an ignorance of the Srbik documentation has resulted in "the standard American textbook notion of Prince Metternich" as "the tyrant who tried to turn the clock back in 1814. . . . The defense of Metternich has long been needed." This "standard textbook notion of Metternich" is nowhere better illustrated than in Gertrude Himmelfarb's analysis in the January Commentary ["The Prophets of the New Conservatism"] of my recent Scribners book *Conservatism Revisited*. Liberalism is an optimistic, unhistorical doctrine of half-truths which I infinitely prefer to the whole-lies of the Hitler-style or Stalin-style fascists, against whom liberals and conservatives must today unite to survive; and the liberal ideal is an open mind, ever eager to let new evidence revise "standard notions." Here Miss Himmelfarb is not liberal *enough*. A liberal open mind toward my Metternich documentation (much of it available in English for the first time) would require her either to disprove the evidence as forgeries —in which case she would strike a brilliant blow against conservatism—or accept the logic of this evidence and change her mind about Metternichian conservatism. She does neither.

Writing on Metternich as if the secret Hapsburg archives had never been opened after 1918, she ignores his far-sighted projects—vetoed by a reactionary emperor—to "reconcile the monarchist principle and the democratic" and to reform the Hapsburg Empire by a freer constitution, an embryonic representative parliament, and a solution of the nationalities problem through greater home rule (especially in Italy) and greater education. Though Metternich made inexcusable errors, which my book stresses rather than whitewashes, he was preferable to his main opponents, the German nationalists like Jahn and Jordan, from whose "Germanic mission" to conquer "inferior" races the Hitler movement descended.

Again, she fails to refute my documentation on 1848, Jordan, and the Jahn youth movement and instead repeats the old myth that Metternich's main opponents were Western-style liberals, opposing him for freedom's sake. His main opponents opposed him because he was not "tyrannic" enough, because he stood for peace instead of nationalist war, for tolerant cosmopolitan Europeanism instead of the dictatorship, anti-Semitism, and bloodthirsty territorial conquests advocated by Jahn, of whom Hans Kohn (leading historian of that period) says in the October *Review of Politics*: ". . . none had a stronger influence on the practical manifestations of German nationalism." In contrast, she dismisses Hitler's influential ancestor Jahn as merely "an aberration of the time." Heine, though just as ardently liberal as Miss Himmelfarb, knew better. Of the anti-Metternichian rebels, he said in 1823: "Although I am a Radical in England and a Carbonarist in Italy, I am no Demagogue in Germany for the entirely accidental reason that, with the triumph of the latter, several thousand Jewish heads, and precisely the best ones, would fall."

And did fall; which is why *Conservatism Revisited* is as much a book on the origins of Nazism as on Metternich. While your 1950 reviewer stresses the democratic element (doubtless present, too) in the German rebels, Heine in 1834 saw in them "demoniac energies, that brutal German joy in battle, the insane Berserker rage, Thor leaping to life with his giant hammer." . . . "I have a feeling of tenderness," wrote Heine, "for Metternich."

She is right in contrasting with Metternich her culture-hero, the "Presumptuous Man," but wrong in identifying him with democracy. Presumptuous Man, through whom the liberals unintentionally prepare the fascism they sincerely detest, demolishes society's ethical dikes against fascism by his nihilistic relativism. If, as most liberals do, you accept Rousseau's un-Freudian natural-goodness-of-man, then only good can come from Presumption's mockery of all established restraints. But if, as conservatives do, you see politics as the secularization of the "Id" or of Original Sin, then the perfect Presumptuous Man is—Jack the Ripper, who was undoubtedly "emancipated from old-fashioned conventions," a courageous "defier of traditional restraints." Against her Presumptuous Man, I suggest coining the phrase "the Reverent Man," whose "bigoted" reverence for the laws of mutual tolerance, self-restraint, and

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Christian-Judaic ethics makes a better basis for a free democracy than the shallow economic determinism and the "Anything Goes" relativism of our Progressive Presumers. Humanist conservatism means that freedom-building reverence of which Herman Melville wrote:

Not magnitude, not lavishness,
But Form—the site;
Not innovating wilfulness,
But reverence for the Archetype.

PETER VIERECK
Northampton, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Your kind suggestion that I comment on Miss Himmelfarb's review of my book *Power* came as a surprise. The critics' task is to correct authors, and authors have no business correcting critics—least of all when they display as much learning and courtesy as Miss Himmelfarb. Should the author feel that his position has been misunderstood, the conclusion he must draw is that he did not make it clear enough, and he should write another book rather than reply.

Since, however, you invite my comments, I offer them here as a token of my interest in Miss Himmelfarb's thinking. I am grateful to Miss Himmelfarb for defining her terms, a precaution too often overlooked. To her a conservative wants to preserve an actual historical situation which he judges to be good (page 82); he distrusts free inquiry and tries to limit man's reason (page 86); above all he is shocked by the man who professes to be the sole judge of his own actions, and seeks to curb him (page 78).

If that is indeed what a conservative is, I do not understand why Miss Himmelfarb includes me among the "prophets" of a New Conservatism. I hold that coercion is inherently unclean and taints those who perform it. I hold that power (i.e., the means to coerce) is inherently dangerous, and tempts those who wield it. I admit that power and coercion are necessary in human society. But they should be kept within the strict bounds of bare necessity. And those who exercise power or act coercively should be in perpetual fear of misusing their damning weapons. I distrust the pretexts invoked to extend power beyond necessity, such as the delusion of mission or the fiction of mandate.

I believe that man, guided by prayer and by reason, should be the chooser of his own actions; that he may trust to his reason because it is warranted by faith; that the light of reason comes from God who could not wish to mislead us. Torn from its roots, however, reason becomes a mere instrument of the desires it was meant to rule over.

I recognize that social man—and man cannot help being social—must submit to many and great restraints of his freedom. This is to be accepted but not disguised. I will bow to any well-grounded restrictions on liberty, but will not have them called new freedoms. . . .

When the monstrous growth of public power is defended on the grounds that the monstrous growth of social concentrations of power calls for an ever stronger control, I reply: "Give ordinary men the tools and they will do the work." Give them credit, an honest currency, less taxation, free judicial assistance, and free access to the courts, so that they may use the might of justice in their own name. Create conditions that make it easier for them to stand up by themselves and for themselves—instead of inducing them to hide behind the skirts of the state. . . .

We have turned our backs upon liberty. But I am not such a pessimist as Miss Himmelfarb takes me to be: the spirit of liberty will arise.

BERTRAND DE JOUVENEL
Anserville par Bornel
France

Miss Himmelfarb Replies

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Liberalism and conservatism have become semantical horrors, but they are still useful in defining a tendency of thought. M. de Jouvenel's letter, it seems to me, places him firmly in the conservative tradition as I described it.

Man "should be the chooser of his own actions," he asserts—and immediately proceeds to vitiate that assertion: man must be "guided by prayer and reason," and reason must not be "torn from its roots" in God lest it become a "mere instrument of the desires it was meant to rule over." The ultimate authority for M. de Jouvenel appears to be not man with his natural desires and natural reason, but some authority superior to man, an authority located somewhere, in a religion, a church, a social custom, a particular time—in 19th-century *laissez-faire*, it would seem. And this was precisely my definition of his brand of conservatism.

Mr. Viereck raises objections that cannot be satisfied by a definition of terms. Yet I cannot help remarking upon this curious aspect of the liberal-conservative controversy, that I should have to take Mr. Viereck to task for not being conservative enough and Mr. Viereck should quarrel with me for not being liberal enough.

I do not doubt that Metternich, ever the willing diplomat, proposed to "reconcile the monarchist principle and the democratic"; I

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do doubt that such a reconciliation is possible, and I suggested that Mr. Viereck, as a conservative, should have been the first to expose the illusoriness of such an enterprise. I, too, am offended by "an optimistic, unhistorical doctrine of half-truths," but it seems to me that Mr. Viereck's brand of conservatism—or his interpretation of Metternich's—meets this description quite as well as the more facile varieties of Enlightenment liberalism.

I do not find the discussion about Jahn illuminating. Surely it would be a *non sequitur* to argue that because no one had a "stronger influence on the practical manifestations of German nationalism" than Jahn, it follows that Jahn, rather than liberalism, was indeed Metternich's main opponent—which is the only point at issue. Nor does the fact that Jahn was "Hitler's influential ancestor" mean that Metternich was engaged in fighting the battle against Hitler. I do not, of course, deny Jahn's insidiousness.

I had hoped that my discussion of conservatism would not place me in any particular sect of liberalism. Least of all should it have led Mr. Viereck to identify me as an exponent of "Rousseau's un-Freudian natural-goodness-of-man." My respectful treatment of Mr. Strauss's *On Tyranny* was intended to restore a sense of complexity to a problem that will not respond to the simple-mindedness of any school. If to Mr. Viereck the perfect "Presumptuous Man" is Jack the Ripper (and incidentally the phrases in quotes—"emancipated from old-fashioned conventions," etc.—are not, as it might appear, mine), then we are forced to conclude, by the same logic, that the perfect "Reverent Man" is Rasputin. In which case, perhaps, with Locke, in the fictitious dialogue that ended my article, we "must take leave to lament the Destiny of the Human Race."

GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB
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The Jewish-Christian Dialogue

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Professor Schoeps' proposal for "A Religious Bridge Between Jew and Christian" (COMMENTARY, February 1950) requires thoughtful consideration if only because the author is a distinguished student of Jewish religious thought. Such a bridge, if possible, is surely to be desired. Professor Schoeps proposes, in brief, that while continuing to reject the messianic claims of Jesus for themselves, Jews shall admit that he had in some sense a messianic character for the non-Jewish world. "With Franz Rosenzweig, I would even go so far as to say that perhaps no Gentile can come to God the Father otherwise than through Jesus Christ." In return, Christians would be called upon to admit that God's covenant with Israel is perfect and valid for Jews. Both Jew and Christian alike are to agree that God has made more than one covenant, each effective and binding on those with whom He made it.

I shall not point out certain inaccuracies of historical fact in Professor Schoeps' presentation; they are not of the essence. His suggestion has a certain charm; but careful scrutiny shows it to be neither practical nor sound in principle.

To begin with the last item in his proposal, can we seriously expect the churches to agree that those who are born into the Old Covenant have no need of the New? Can official Christianity, after nineteen centuries of trying to argue us, lure us, or torture us into accepting its way of salvation, now confess that the effort was unnecessary? The letter which Dr. Schoeps quotes from Karl Barth—one of the least conventional thinkers of modern Protestantism—seems sufficient answer.

The reason why the churches cannot make this concession is the same reason why the synagogue cannot recognize the New Covenant—the content of the New Testament. Dr. Schoeps notes only one difficulty—the doctrine of the obduracy of the Jews as taught in Paul's letter to the Romans. But consider the Fourth Gospel, with all its undoubted spiritual sublimity. It is permeated by a real hatred for everything Jewish. Even the Synoptic Gospels, which contain so much Biblical and Pharisaic doctrine, report that "the Jews" (as a whole) demanded the crucification of Jesus and solemnly took his blood on their heads and on the heads of their children. How then can any Christian who reveres the New Testament as authoritative regard the unbaptized Jew as already saved through the Old Covenant?

For us the difficulties are even greater. However much that is sublime and good—and Jewish—the Christian Scriptures may contain, these documents also contain bitter, and—to our way of thinking—untrue attacks upon us and our faith. They declare that the Torah is not a means of salvation, but the vehicle of a curse, and that all of humankind are tainted with original sin. They affirm that Jesus, though a Jew after the flesh, was a divine being, the incarnate Logos. How can we say that such doctrines, which we believe false, are true and valid for someone else? Shall we adopt a kind of racial criterion, so that what is true for those born of Gentile parents is not true for those of Jewish "blood"?

Dr. Schoeps says rightly that the face of mankind was changed by the appearance of Jesus—more properly, part of mankind was

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changed thereby. But there were Zarathustra and the authors of the Upanishads and Buddha before Jesus, and Mohammed after him—to say nothing of Socrates and Plato and Aristotle and Copernicus and Galileo. Why should we recognize the Christian gospel as the one revelation of God to the Gentile world?

Jewish teachers have long since declared that Christianity and Islam are far superior to paganism. These younger faiths are the means by which men were brought from idolatry to a knowledge of the one God and His moral law. They are true to the extent that they embody Jewish principles, and untrue to the extent that they depart from Judaism. Even from a fundamentalist standpoint, we could extend this same tolerance to the religions of the ancient Orient as well as to modern philosophic and scientific discoveries—that which is in accord with Judaism is acceptable and good.

From the liberal religious standpoint, which regards no document, tradition, or doctrine as possessing absolute authority rooted in a supernatural origin, the results are not so very different. "O Lord," runs a beautiful passage in the Union Prayerbook, "open our eyes that we may see and welcome all truth, whether shining from the annals of ancient revelation or reaching us through the seers of our own time; for Thou hidest not Thy light from any generation of Thy children that yearn for Thee and seek Thy guidance." As liberals, we will accept truth wherever we find it, testing it by reason and by experience. It may be that on this basis we will find the essential teachings of Judaism to be the most convincing, the most acceptable, and the most inspiring religious values. We shall then be believing liberal Jews. We can view with respect and reverence the doctrines and standards that other men have chosen, not only to the extent that they agree with ours, but even when they differ sharply from our own. But among these other doctrines, we cannot admit that any one has a special validity or sanctity above all others.

The basis for interfaith understanding, it seems to me, must be a double one. First is the recognition that the various religions have much in common; Christianity and Islam necessarily share much of our heritage, since they grew out of Judaism.

Second is the right of all those who believe something to try to win others to their belief. I have never shared the resentment of some Jews at the existence of Christian efforts to convert us, even though I may have been irritated at the crude methods sometimes adopted. This missionary effort is in essence both proper and commendable. But—and this the Christian world must recognize—we also have the right to tell the Gentiles about our doctrines and practices with a view to winning them to our side.

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TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It is of the greatest significance that, when professional theological journals in this country are filled with either sentimental or academic argumentation, a secular journal should provide us with clear and courageous thinking in the area of Biblical faith. Professor Schoeps has created the possibility for mature conversation between Christian and Jew by suggesting categories which avoid the superficiality of the "interfaith" movement. If we continue to try to solve the problem of Jew and Christian by appeals to a moralism (i.e. brotherhood) outside of both Christianity and Judaism, we will both weaken the religious faith of Christian and Jew and provide ammunition for our humanist brethren. If "brotherhood" can redeem us then we scarcely need the Living God of Passover and Easter.

Only prolonged and honest discussion can validate or invalidate the two covenant hypothesis. Normative Christianity has never held that God's redeeming activity need be limited to the Christian faith.

It would seem to this reader that the discussion must proceed along the dialectical level suggested by Professor Schoeps. The radical differences between Judaism and Christianity are given meaning by recognizing that the differences are themselves contributory to a purpose which transcends both Judaism and Christianity. Judaism, by pressing Christian theology at its most vulnerable point (the hiatus between the Christian theory of redemption and Christian history), can do much to bring about a clarification of Christian thought. At the same time it will be necessary for Judaism to press against itself by, for instance, recognizing that the parallel existence of the Christian faith has helped Judaism to remember that its faith lives, not only in the law, but by the grace of God.

Meanwhile, Christian theology must press against Judaism by asking whether the theory that "we know in history no middle, but only an end" is really as Biblical as it sounds. Secondly, Christian thought must press against itself by granting that the religion of the synagogue has helped us to avoid the peril of an anti-nomian, anti-Biblical view of history.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Record and Testament

THE WALL. By JOHN HERSEY. Knopf. 632 pp. $4.00.

Reviewed by DAVID DAICHES

THIS book, as most people will have learned by now, is the story of the Warsaw ghetto from November 1939 to May 1943 told by means of a fictional diary kept by Noach Levinson, self-appointed archivist of Polish Jewry. Mr. Hersey makes no attempt to tell the whole grim story, but concentrates on a manageable group of characters through whose reactions and fortunes the larger issues are projected and symbolized. The book ends with the Battle of the Ghetto of spring 1943, and the escape of a small remnant of fighters to join the Jewish partisans in the Lomianki Forest.

It is impossible to read or discuss this book as though it were purely a work of the imagination. We know that what Mr. Hersey describes took place—or if not actually what he describes, then the same kind of thing, and on a much larger scale—and we cannot discuss the tragic action as though it were the action of *Hamlet* or *The Brothers Karamazov*. This is a book about the Jews of Warsaw, about their fears and hopes and suffering and heroism, a book about one phase of the monstrous evil which was enacted only a few years ago, and the knowledge of this is with us continuously as we read.

The particular personal events narrated here are often imaginary; but the larger pattern is a matter of history. One simply cannot write a tragedy about a situation whose real-life implications are still very much with us and which still arouse sorrow and indignation for what they were, not for what they can be made to be in literary art.

The Wall is therefore not a tragic book. Nor is it, on the other hand, simply a work of history disguised as fiction. What, therefore, does Mr. Hersey give us that is not to be found in the historical record, in the factual accounts of survivors or the composite reconstructions of researchers?

HE GIVES us, in the first place, the record of his own noble and almost desperate sympathy. One might almost say that the book is the record of its author's passionate endeavor to discover what these people were who aroused the sadistic furies of the Nazis, how they lived, what they thought and felt, and what it was like to be caught in a ghetto and doomed to extinction. One can see that anxiety to find out what it must have been like in the book's form: Levinson the archivist, always listening, always observing, always interrogating, always writing down what people said or did in particular circumstances, is surely a projection of Mr. Hersey himself. Like Noach Levinson, Mr. Hersey was also collecting the pieces with a view to seeing what the total meaning came to, only Levinson's creator goes beyond his created character and looks more overtly for the total meaning than Levinson was able to do.

The diary form, with its sporadic jottings, its fitting together of entries from this date and that, its brackets within brackets containing parenthetical explanations by the "editor" and explanatory passages from other parts of the diary, do not make for a good prose style or even for ease of reading. There is no tragic sweep in the language, which is jerky and often uncouth. The English is sometimes positively bad, and it may not be pedantic to point out, for example, that Mr. Hersey more than once uses "disinterested" to mean "uninterested" and "demeaned" in the sense of "having one's importance diminished." Nevertheless, in spite of his having deprived himself of the advantages of a cogent and impressive prose style, Mr. Hersey has achieved something significant by the diary form he employs: he has given the impression of somebody, with great labor and infinite patience, searching, searching, for the meaning of it all, setting down the facts one after another to see what can be made of them, what they really *mean*.

The impact of the novel does not arise from

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its literary grace or skill, but develops cumulatively from this patient presentation of small individual scenes. For all its 632 pages it is not too long a book, for if it is to achieve its effect in this way it must be long. With earnest care Mr. Hersey shows us the slow progression from acceptance of inferior status to realization of ultimate doom. The most arresting parts of the book are those middle sections where he shows the ghetto life adjusting itself to all the restrictions and dangers of the new regime: each new insult and injury is perforce accepted, and a new kind of normality emerges. Life goes on, there are weddings and concerts and pathetic attempts at festivity; as the ghetto becomes more and more confined and living conditions become more crowded, unsanitary, and humiliating, new standards soon become taken as a matter of course. When Sienna Street is removed from the ghetto area, and the already teeming ghetto is confined within a still narrower space, the shabbier Chlodny Street replaces Sienna Street as the street on which "everybody who *is* anybody" wants to live. The devices to keep some remnant of dignity and hope, of routine and purposeful daily activity, have to be continually renewed, and Mr. Hersey presents the process with great skill. Even in the midst of the typhus epidemic, and of the subsequent ever increasing daily removals of Jews "for re-settlement in the East," the resilience of routine asserts itself and life goes on.

The ghetto, into which more and more Jews are poured, is gradually decreased in size, and then the second process, of removing its inhabitants to gas chambers, begins. The discovery, by a ghetto agent sent out to "the Aryan side" for the purpose, that resettlement in the East is simply mass slaughter, and the final discovery that all the Jews are destined for that end, finally stops—though not abruptly—the perpetual process of adjustment to ever worsening conditions. The adjustment, symbolized by the increasingly dubious significance of the Judenrat and the Jewish police, founded to allow the Jews to administer their own "order" (under German directive) in the ghetto, breaks down only when the final doom is fully realized. Only then do the varying factions get together, and only then is a militant fighters' organization set up to fight back as far as they can and meet death actively rather than trundling passively in trucks and railway cars to the gas chambers.

PERHAPS the most effective single incident in the book is the ritual slaughter of the emaciated work horse, purchased as food through the underground for a fantastically large sum. The horse is not, of course, a kosher animal, but the starving rabbi rules that in the circumstances it can be eaten, if it is properly slaughtered (though *shechitah* is now prohibited). The "*shecht*-ing" of the wretched beast is a remarkable scene, and Mr. Hersey manages to infuse into his writing at this point a full sense of the meaning and (the word is hardly too strong) the beauty of the ritual. This slaughter by traditional Jewish humane methods of a bony horse in order to make a pathetic feast for a group of Jews and their rabbi is a perfect symbol of that adjustment which is the theme of much of the book. Yet the idea of adjustment reveals itself as all wrong, and when it is finally replaced by resistance, however hopeless, the whole tone of the book changes. There is a dignity in adjustment, in nobly making the best of a bad job, in carrying on as though things were the same as they had once been, but beyond a certain point the dignity disappears and the pretence of living in a normal world—or indeed in any livable world—becomes grotesque and shameful. In the meticulous tracing of the reactions of a group of individuals through the period of adjustment to the period of defiance lies much of this novel's power and insight.

It looks at first as though the book is moving to a purely nationalist conclusion, as though the discovery by all the Jews in the ghetto of their solidarity as Jews *contra mundum* is to be presented as the saving idea. But, while Mr. Hersey shows how this idea grew and examines its effect on different characters, he does not allow it to become the "message" of the book. While *The Wall* is full of tentative conclusions, aphorisms, resolutions, professions of faith, made by one or other of the characters or by the diarist Levinson himself, the book comes to rest on none of them. It ends on a question: the few survivors are speaking together in the forest and Rachel asks: "*Nu,* what is the plan for tomorrow?"

IMMEDIATELY preceding this conclusion, however, we have a conversation between Levinson and the heroine Rachel. They are waiting in the sewer for means of escape into the forest, and while they wait they talk. Levinson asks Rachel what she thinks about God, "now that

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she was on the point of graduating from ghetto-school life."

"Rachel: I didn't have much chance to learn about God; I am rather unclear as to God. But so far as the rest of our religion is concerned, I think there is only one thing: not to hurt anybody. For me the whole of the Torah is in one sentence in Leviticus: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

"N.L.: Even if thy neighbor is a Nazi?

"Rachel: How else cure him of being a Nazi?

"N.L.: Maybe there is no cure. Maybe you have to kill him.

"Rachel: I've tried that, and where did it get me? Where am I now?

"N.L.: In a sewer."

THERE is little talk of this kind in the body of the novel, but the problem raised in this conversation is always in the background. What is the proper attitude to be adopted by a group publicly stigmatized as subhuman and doomed to suffering and slaughter? The problem is all the more complicated because the group is no easily definable community; it includes members who have no awareness of being members and some who have no desire to be members; it is neither a religion nor a nation nor a territorial group nor is it homogeneous linguistically, socially, or even racially. We can see the diverse elements in Warsaw Jewry facing this problem, circling round it, resisting having the question posed. But the question *is* posed, in a terribly practical way, and the answer must be given equally practically.

The final answer is unity and resistance, but though final in terms of the novel it is still only a temporary answer. Rachel's final question—"*Nu,* what is the plan for tomorrow?"—remains with us as we close the book. Noach Levinson's talk of Peretz in the height of the ghetto battle—"Peretz, the voice of Eastern European Jewry; Peretz, the most expressive and most all-embracing writer on Jewishness"—is an attempt to focus the problem preparatory to the final answer; it concludes with a significant quotation from Peretz: "Ghetto is impotence. Cultural cross-fertilization is the only possibility for human development. Humanity must be the synthesis, the sum, the quintessence of all national cultural forms and philosophies."

But even this formulation leaves the final question still unanswered. What kind of unity should Jews aim at? And what happens if the non-Jewish world repudiates the notion of cross-fertilization? Or if the Jews themselves repudiate it?

MR. HERSEY touches on these questions lightly but effectively in many different ways throughout the novel. For example, the efforts made by the Jewish Socialist leader Rapaport to achieve solidarity with Polish Socialists outside the ghetto come to nothing, although there are some important contributions made by individual Polish Socialists to the struggle in the ghetto. The anti-Semitism of the Poles, which needed little encouragement from the Germans, is fully recognized, without being melodramatically exaggerated. There are several specific instances of kindness and assistance from non-Jew to Jew, but they are insignificant in the general pattern. Yet it is significant that so long as the doomed people accept their doom, so long as the period of adjustment exists, the non-Jewish population remains completely indifferent or contemptuous: the ghetto gets some help from outside only when it has started to fight.

Such suggestions are the work of real knowledge and insight. There is little that Mr. Hersey presents in his novel that is not borne out by the historical record. By and large the tone is right, the background is right, the kinds of situation he presents are right. And—surprisingly, perhaps, in such a warm-hearted and sympathetic author—there is not a trace of sentimentality. There is an astringency in the writing, an utter refusal to idealize his characters, that succeeds in disguising the author's strong personal involvement in what he is describing.

That astringency is a remarkable achievement, something that probably could not have been achieved by a Jewish writer. We are spared nothing: Jewish treachery, Jewish anti-Semitism, are here as well as Jewish timidity and lack of imagination. This is what gives the true note of authenticity to the novel. The ghetto becomes heroic only slowly and reluctantly (although there are many heroic individuals from the beginning), and the heroism when it comes is sardonic rather than romantic. Again, it is only the meticulous building up of detail that makes such a presentation possible and credible.

Of the larger questions raised in *The Wall* Mr. Hersey answers only one—the question of

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the attitude of the civilized and humane non-Jew to this deliberate horror. He has answered it implicitly by the very fact of writing this book. How much labor and research Mr. Hersey put into his writing I do not know; but it is clear that he must have spent a great deal of time studying the history and customs of Polish Jewry, Jewish religious ritual, Jewish folklore, humor, prejudices, traditions. It is amazing that someone with no trace of a Jewish background should have been able to write convincingly about the Warsaw ghetto using throughout the words of an imaginary Jewish character. Earlier reviewers of *The Wall* have not, it seems to me, sufficiently recognized the magnitude of Mr. Hersey's achievement here, or the degree of human warmth which prompted it.

THERE are, it is true, many errors of fact and interpretation in Mr. Hersey's presentation of Jewish customs and traditions. He has some serious errors in describing Jewish burial practices, and seems to know nothing of the functions of the *Chevrah Kedushah* here. He gives a wrong explanation for such things as "Mizrach" or "Lag Ba' Omer." One could compile quite a list. But these are extremely minor matters, and dwindle into insignificance beside his total achievement in presenting Polish Jewish life. He seems to have made himself thoroughly familiar with the Jewish prayer book, and on the whole uses it effectively. And the myriad other details he gets right are a tribute to the time and care he must have spent in preparing his materials.

If, then, *The Wall* is inadequate as a tragic novel, it is more than adequate as a fictional record of the struggles of Warsaw Jewry essentially accurate in tone and incident and presented with an elaboration of detail which makes clear the gradual transformation of the ghetto, under the impact of Nazi policy, from a home of suffering opportunism to one of disillusioned heroism. This is a remarkable enough achievement. But more remarkable still is the fact that Mr. Hersey should have chosen to write this book and to put so much labor into it.

We are still close enough to the events he describes, and civilization is still precarious enough as a result of those and similar events, for us to be able to appreciate this book, whatever else it may or may not be, as a splendid and moving testament of one man's understanding and humanity.

The Southern Citadel

SOUTHERN POLITICS: IN STATE AND NATION. By V. O. KEY, JR. With the assistance of Alexander Heard. Knopf. 675 pp. $6.00.

Reviewed by RICHARD HOFSTADTER

THE SOUTH has never lost its nationalism. Since 1850 its relations with the rest of the nation have been much like the conduct of foreign affairs, or as Professor Key calls it, "a sort of sublimated foreign war." The Southern Democratic party has been both the army of resistance and the diplomatic corps: through it the South has manifested its solidarity against the rest of the nation, and through it she has contracted valuable alliances with other elements in the country. And just as the impact of an external crisis causes a tightening of the ranks and a lapse of criticism in the nation at large, so the constant potential "enemy" to her race system that the white South sees in the rest of the nation has operated as a perennial inhibiting force in her domestic affairs. Psychologically she is under a continuous state of siege.

The South's internal politics most frequently attract national attention as a kind of low-comedy spectacle, and serious criticism of the South generally turns directly on its race relations or on the role of the Southern delegation in Congress and its impact on national affairs. It is a great merit of V. O. Key's close survey of Southern politics that it supplies us with ample, solid, and systematic information on the confusing Southern local scene. Key's book is significant not merely for what it tells about the South but also for the light it sheds on the mechanics of one-partyism. The one-party system in the South is the political corollary of the master-race complex. Its fundamental concern in local affairs is white supremacy; the one indispensable function of the Southern Democratic party in Washington is to make certain that these local arrangements will not be disturbed from outside.

The hub of the classic liberal interpretation of society has been the idea of competition, especially among political parties. The essence of "good" liberal politics is that it manages first to raise issues in a fairly coherent form for debate and then to compromise them in the process of policy-formation without resort to violence and without causing excessive instability in political institutions. Theoretically the

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party of the "outs" under the two-party system is supposed to organize the various social interests that have been offended in one way or another by the policies of the "ins," until at last enough have been forged together to oust the "ins" and rectify a good proportion of the grievances. I believe this mechanism has not worked nearly as well in our national history as it does in the theoretical model that the political scientists have constructed for their classrooms; but it has had a rough kind of working order, and its failures are probably due as much to other deficiencies in our political culture as to the party mechanism itself.

At any rate, the South does not have this kind of party politics; it has a variety of political factionalism in which the internal and local issues of Southern society have been driven underground. There is no coherent party of the "outs" and little more than the rudiments of a mass electorate. Political opposition is thus diverted from what might be, and ought to be, major issues of policy bearing upon the public welfare. Political leaders frequently have no clear association with ideas and policies, and in some cases even with each other. Politically active people move more or less freely, but without this having much more than a personal meaning, from faction to faction. They are like a negative caricature of the independent voter who may flourish where there is a vigorous two-party battle; where he keeps his independence so that he is free to vote in accordance with the issues, they are independent because there are no issues. Even under the two-party system the issues actually raised in campaigns have frequently been factitious, to be sure; but the Southern one-party system almost *guarantees* that they will be. In the absence of meaningful issues, campaigns center on personalities or cliques, on outstanding demagogues who can draw crowds primarily in their capacity as entertainers. The absence of parties and issues isolates state from national politics; thus it is extremely difficult to inject significant national issues into the state arena and vitalize the Southern political mind from outside. As a result, the South has "no system or practice of political organization and leadership adequate to cope with its problems."

His concern with a general characterization of the one-party system has not led Professor Key to neglect its specific variants. In fact, one of the best and most convincing parts of the book is the long sequence in which the patterns of politics in various Southern states are sharply and closely delineated. One might begin with North Carolina, the most progressive of the Southern states both economically and racially, which is also the closest to having the two-party system as it operates elsewhere. By contrast, the state of Arkansas represents the one-party system in its purest and most undefiled form, untainted by a trace of a significant issue. One might similarly contrast the politics of Virginia, where a tight oligarchy, albeit a fairly honest and efficient one, has "subverted democratic institutions and deprived most Virginians of a voice in their government," with Florida, where an extreme form of political atomization exists in which every man works for himself in a maze of amorphous and shifting factions. Again, there is an instructive comparison between Louisiana and Mississippi. In Louisiana, under the auspices of the Long machine and with the compliance of an extremely simple electorate, an almost absolute dictatorship has been achieved—a virtual dictatorship of the illiterate—which is nevertheless capable of coupling with its demagogy and corruption some welfare accomplishments. In Mississippi, where redneck farmers of the hill sections generally line up against delta farmers, demagogy is no less common, but the dire poverty of the state makes it all but impossible to translate any of the promises into welfare policies. One could, once again, compare the politics of South Carolina, where the Negro question is more prominent than elsewhere, and where racial oratory is the primary agency by which actual issues are stifled, with the politics of Texas, where the economic basis of politics is most conspicuous. Texas, whose politics reflect the presence of a great many newly rich people with a primitive conservative mentality, is much less concerned about race and much more with making money and defending property; its chief political division not only takes place along general lines but also permits the expression of genuine issues.

That the race complex is the primary incubus of Southern politics Professor Key has no doubt. The core of Southern political solidarity lies in the white population of the black belt. It is those whites from the plantation areas who live in areas of the highest concentration of the colored population who are most inflexible in their political allegiance and most militant racially, as Professor Key ingeniously shows by

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an analysis of the elections of 1928 and 1948. "It must be conceded," he concludes, "that there is one, and only one, real basis for southern unity: the Negro." In a sense, this book is an elaborate demonstration of the political costs of prejudice.

THERE is nothing impressionistic about Professor Key's study. Financed by the Rockefeller Foundation, it was carried on at the University of Alabama with the benefit of a staff of investigators. It makes use of many techniques of quantitative analysis, and is replete with maps, charts, graphs, and statistical tables. On the whole, it is a successful illustration of the use of statistical methods in politics, which shows that they can be effectively combined with more informal modes of understanding. Among American political studies it is bound to have the stature of a classic.

I found Professor Key's discussion of the role of the South in the nation, which occupies only a minor portion of the book, far less impressive than his analysis of the internal mechanisms of Southern politics. It is at this point too that his use of quantitative methods seems least adequate to the task. He has subjected to analysis the liberal stereotype of Southern Democratic collaboration with Northern conservative Republicans to defeat liberal legislation, and he has found it wanting.

He has approached the problem through a quantitative study of a large number of roll calls in a sample of seven sessions of the Senate and four sessions of the House from 1933 to 1945. The effect of this technique is to show that on an immense number of routine types of small decisions the Southern Democrats generally conformed to the pattern of their party and voted against the majority of Republicans. I question the validity of lumping a vast number of routine and unimportant roll calls together with votes on major measures of policy and expressing the results in percentages. It would be more illuminating to go back fifty years and study the voting record of the Southern delegation in Congress on some one hundred outstanding measures of policy rather than to study 598 Senate roll calls, many of them on trivia, in only seven sessions. Professor Key, of course, has not altogether ignored qualitative considerations; he has separately examined the roll calls on certain *types* of legislation, although he has not evaluated the measures by their *importance*. Where he discusses types of legislation, his results show, not surprisingly, that Southern Democrats have been firm party and administration adherents in foreign policy but have bolted to vote with Republicans on certain types of agricultural policies and particularly on labor questions. Voting in the House shows that representatives of Southern urban areas do not vote with Republicans as frequently as their rural colleagues; the Southern Democrat-Republican alliance, when it occurs, must be seen as an agrarian coalition, the force of which may be progressively diminished with the further growth of urbanism in the South.

But the primary operation of Southern Democratic influence through the mechanism of the Congressional committee and the seniority system, which is not too amenable to study by quantitative methods, is not assessed in these pages. Professor Key concedes that "the tactical advantage that the South enjoys through the capacity of its committee chairmen to bottle up measures does not reflect itself in congressional roll calls." Such gaps in this work suggest the need of another book of similarly grand proportions on the South's role in national politics. It should be done by someone with Professor Key's patience, detachment, and devotion to the democratic process.

Three First Novels

A LONG DAY'S DYING. By FREDERICK BUECHNER. Knopf. 267 pp. $3.00.

THE CANNIBAL. By JOHN HAWKES. New Directions. 272 pp. $1.50.

THE SHELTERING SKY. By PAUL BOWLES. New Directions. 318 pp. $2.50

Reviewed by WALLACE MARKFIELD

HERE are three first novels by young writers; the youngest, as the book-jacket proudly states, is twenty-three. These are not the customary immature products to be jabbed with rusty critical knives. They show strict control, with none of those qualities of youthful ebullience and sentimentality which so often pervade the work of first novelists. Yet the admirable restraint, the scrupulous attention to craftsmanship in Frederick Buechner and Paul Bowles seem only to disguise a basic lack of creative energy, especially when juxtaposed against an imagination as rich and overpowering as that of John Hawkes. Both their novels have the

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same basic theme—the anguish of the modern intellectual, who, unable to communicate his need for love, is condemned to isolation in a world which he can only analyze and endure. But the tragic significance of this theme is never captured, for the human beings who move through these novels are merely the shadowy backdrop against which the real hero, entitled perhaps "The Modern Dilemma," is illuminated.

Nevertheless, from a literary perspective as dim and vacant as the present, the critic must award them whatever honors go to failures of the highest order. Certainly no recent novel has come so close to technical perfection as *A Long Day's Dying*, and it is amazing to witness such skill in a young writer. Somehow one would expect that, with the best of intentions, obsessive early experiences would intrude to jar the total harmony. But Buechner has not sought to scotch the tormenting ghosts of childhood, nor is he bound by external political or religious pressures.

A Long Day's Dying is a study of gentle decay, in which the characters seem to shrink from the pressure of reality. Presumably, it is with Leander Poor that the novel is most concerned. A young college student, he is threatened by the disease which destroys all those about him, a disease that has its roots in the moral emptiness of contemporary sophisticated intelligence. His mother Elizabeth is courted by two men: Tristan Bone, who moves through his dilettante world with the ponderous grace of a leviathan, and George Motley, whose art is merely the charming guise of a precocious and wicked child. Their lives, based upon the "undesired grotesqueness of a physical relationship," are closed off from each other. What little plot there is concerns itself with Elizabeth's "seduction" at the hands of her son's friend, and the subsequent emotional poverty it reveals as she refuses to accept the implications of this action. Desiring each other's love, the characters are nevertheless filled with the dread of genuine feeling, so that their mutual need finds expression only in the language of self-betrayal and hate.

The very perception of this theme demonstrates Buechner's great talent. He has written some magnificent scenes—the episode at the Cloisters, Tristan awaiting a train at Grand Central; his combination of fantasy and objective detail is often wonderfully effective. The difficulty arises when Buechner persists in a private, oblique imagery which is unable to sustain the load it is meant to bear. For example, Elizabeth lying in bed "would fold her pillows again and again like letters asking not for love but only for understanding." This nebulous over-refinement crops up in the treatment of the characters, who seem to be constantly standing aside from a situation, neatly summing it up and leveling out its complexities in such a manner as to maintain the movement of the novel upon an unnecessarily monotonous level.

The chief failure, I think, lies in the fact that the highly wrought and sometimes meticulous style is pushed to extremes that do not permit maintenance of its ballet-like balance. The characterization, though brilliant in its external finish, is never penetrating, and the big scenes suffer from a lack of genuine intensity. The people who move through the novel are bloodless, without a certain contradictory human quality which might save them from emerging as mere intellectual abstractions. As a result, much of the symbolism is neither rich nor penetrating, but slightly grotesque. When Tristan's pet monkey slits his throat in imitation of his master's pantomiming gesture of self-destruction, the episode appears contrived, lacking the irony that might have given it the force of a superb parable.

It is strange to observe the lack of daring in a writer so young as Buechner. By sounding his theme on a minor key, he has avoided many of the commonplace errors in craftsmanship and demonstrated a great deal of critical intelligence. But somehow one feels that his world is filled with brittle museum pieces that tend to disintegrate even under the careful hand of the connoisseur.

The Cannibal is a far more experimental venture than *A Long Day's Dying*. On the most simple reading, it is the story of one day in the history of a small German town, told with utter disregard for orthodox chronology and sequence. The year is 1945, and the life of the town is as diseased and sluggish as its choked sewers. ("The undertaker had no more fluid for his corpses; the town nurse grew old and fat on no food at all.") It is policed by one American soldier on a motorcycle, who represents the authority of the Occupation. When the day ends, he has been ambushed and assassinated.

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Tormented by memories, the characters are passive, somnambulistic victims of history. Their world is distorted and hallucinatory, haunted by grotesque specters from the past; even as one of them strangles a chicken, the face of the old Kaiser is dimly seen pressed against a window; another runs wildly down a street in pursuit of an open carriage, shedding his identity with each step and emerging finally as Princip, the young assassin of Sarajevo. Vague childhood fears become a terrorizing reality as decayed bodies assume obscene gestures that mock the living, as ghosts clamber out of the turrets of rusted, overturned tanks.

Hawkes does not focus the novel upon a single character. He attempts rather to portray the obsessions of many different minds submerged in a nightmare. The seeming ludicrousness of many of his images serves only to heighten our sense of horror as we perceive their full import—the dead monkey rising from the heap of bodies, tail coiled about his neck, screaming "Dark is life, dark, dark is death," children sliding down staircases on their stumps—these symbols serve to concentrate our vision upon a scene of desolation as terrifying as anything in modern literature. We cross the border of fantasy into another universe: the tiny village becomes not a microscopic representation of Occupied Germany and the rest of the world; instead, it is these larger entities that assume the dimensions of Spitzen-on-the-Dien.

Hawkes gives the impression of a talent rich, diffuse—and virtually uncontrollable. His preoccupation with filth and decay is extreme. ("All during the day the villagers had been burning out the pits of excrement, burning the fresh trenches of latrines where wads of wet newspaper were scattered . . . where pools of water became foul with waste that was as ugly as the aged squatter.") The macabre aspect of his humor is sometimes overworked, and the cocoons undulating in the mouths of corpses give one the feeling of a malevolent child displaying a boxful of worms. Nevertheless, Hawkes is a cold and brilliant writer, with a superb eye for visual and olfactory detail. He has succeeded in carrying off the prize which has up to now eluded the grasping fingers of the Kafka cult: namely, the achievement of truth through distortion.

Of the three novels under consideration, *The Sheltering Sky* seems the one most likely to succeed. (As of this writing, it is eleventh on the best-seller list.) Bowles owes much to E. M. Forster, attempting, one suspects with a high degree of consciousness, to use North Africa in much the same way that Forster used India—a curved mirror that distorts even as it reflects the dilemma of Western man. But despite his seductive skill which captures the glittering outlines of Arab marketplaces, wine shops, and sulky prostitutes, the novel is never able to rise above a certain tourist level. The characters seem to move in a comatose state from one baroque elliptical scene to the next, never coming to life or generating dramatic tension.

Bowles has taken Lost Modern Woman and opened the sores of her Sickness Unto Death. We perceive the decay of a marriage—the meaningless chatter and fatigued politeness, the painful separateness in sex, the lost ability to love. The tortuous journey she undertakes with her husband only heightens the profound barrenness of their mutual lives. The surroundings are mysterious and threatening, even as they hold out the secret promise of a redeeming Nature, wherein, as Sir Thomas Browne wrote, "the greatest Balsams do lie enveloped in the most powerful Corrosives." For the husband, the Corrosive is too powerful, and the exotic atmosphere brings only death.

In a state of shock, the heroine goes off on a strange adventure, wandering out over the desert sands, where she is finally picked up by a camel train. Some of the scenes that follow are like the films of Rudolf Valentino. It is the same Sheik, garnished with camel dung and flies, who sweeps her off to his desert stronghold. A simple child of nature, he is able to satisfy not only the heroine, but the three other women of his harem. His sex life is distinguished by a sense of workmanship and efficiency that can scarcely be matched by any character in recent fiction, unless it is by one of the dashing swashbucklers of the historical romance.

"Raped" twice on her first encounter with the potent nomad, the heroine is able to abstract herself from the experience and this vicarious aspect sets the tone of the entire episode. Before her adventures have run their course, she is thoroughly purged of her sensibility, and succeeds in finding salvation through violation. At the end, we are left with the image of a small desert bird parading in the feathers of D. H. Lawrence's plumed serpent.

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In the Here and Now

THE PROPHETIC FAITH. By MARTIN BUBER. Macmillan. 247 pp. $3.75.

Reviewed by EMIL L. FACKENHEIM

THOMAS À KEMPIS wrote: "Every holy writing ought to be read in the same spirit in which it was written." Our modern era fails to understand the Bible to the degree to which it fails to heed Thomas's warning.

The Hebrew Bible is a report of a succession of dialogues between God and Israel; the present-day student—formidably armed with philology, archaeology, and other tools of critical research—almost without reflection regards it as a metaphorical account of the "evolution of religious experience," or—which is worse—religious "ideas." He does not argue or attempt to prove, but takes it for granted that his categories are correct, and those of the Bible wrong. He forgets that the ability to disentangle historical and literary details is not identical with the ability to perceive the essence of Biblical faith. Let it be added quickly that this is, of course, no argument against Biblical criticism as such; and those apologists of Orthodoxy who occasionally attempt to use specific inadequacies of Biblical criticism as a prop are certainly misguided, if not intellectually dishonest. But it *is* an argument against the sort of Biblical criticism which is uncritical of itself.

For many decades now, Martin Buber has been a voice crying in the wilderness. Himself fully armed with the tools of Biblical criticism, he has consistently opposed, as a prejudice vicious to the understanding of Biblical faith, any form of "reductionism." To reduce what the Bible regards as a genuine God-man encounter to such modern categories as a "development of religious theories" or to a "reflection of a social struggle" is a procedure demanded not by scientific method but by intellectual prejudice. In order to understand the Bible, one need not believe that God exists, or that He can reveal Himself, or that He has actually done so; but one must use these beliefs as ultimate, serious, and irreducible working hypotheses, so to speak, while reading the Bible. In other words, one must read it "in the spirit in which it was written."

ALMOST twenty-five years ago, Buber wrote: "The Bible—a book made up of books perhaps, yet *one* book . . . made one by one fundamental theme: the encounter of a community of men with Him who is Nameless." Since that time, Buber has had no occasion to modify this fundamental insight, and he has applied himself to the task arising from it: the study of the reflections of this encounter in the men who took part in it. To this end the present volume is a notable contribution.

It is significant that Buber is forced to engage in sustained polemic against contemporary beliefs in order to come to grips with the nature of prophetic faith. For obvious reasons, it is tempting to interpret prophetic faith in terms of the gradual evolution of universalistic "ideas." Viewed by this standard, Amos "approached near to monotheism, but did not actually reach it" (quoted by Buber), Deutero-Isaiah becomes "the first monotheist of Israel," and such early pieces as the Song of Deborah have presumably not reached the stage of monotheism at all. It is ideas which become progressively "purified," while other ideas are left behind as "superstitions."

To apply this standard to the prophets is, we have said, tempting: where, if not among the prophets, has religious universalism reached its grand expression? Yet it is against this standard that Buber revolts: "The old controversy among scholars, whether the Hebrews who wandered from Egypt to Canaan were 'polytheists' or 'monotheists' . . . is an unreal business." What is primary in Biblical faith is not that only one God exists, but that only one God has a claim on Israel, a claim exclusive and all-demanding. Biblical man is concerned with God not in detached philosophic speculation, but in inescapable commitment. Looked at in this way, the development of prophetic faith no longer appears as a progress in objective insights, where former views are left behind as false and "superstitious"; it emerges as a vital unity. The exclusive commitment to the One of Israel remains the unaltered reality, and what changes is merely the interpretation and implications of that reality. God's significance for the flesh-and-blood Jew emerges prior both in time and in essence to His cosmic significance.

BUBER thus insists that what he calls the "dialogical" relation between God and Biblical man be taken seriously. In the Bible God really addresses man, then and there. And it it not "man as such" who is addressed: God *singles out*—Israel in concrete situations and a

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specific prophet. What makes this relation dialogical is that God's address demands a *free response*. It is true, of course, that the prophets insist on a human responsibility which presupposes freedom and is obligated to universal standards. Yet even here, as Buber is able to show, the prophets do not speak of a general obligation to a timeless ideal, but of *specific* decisions imposed on *specific* people by *specific* encounters with the living God. Whether God is eternal is important only derivatively, a subject for later reflection. The immediate certainty is the fact of God's presence, and the need to fulfill His commandments; what these demands are—the content of His revelation—is no *a priori* and unchanging certainty.

Modern thinkers tend to reverse the truth. Soft-peddling the prophet's "Thus saith the Lord," they transform the content of the message from one spoken for the "here and now" into a timeless ideal. Thus becomes obscured the nature of the decision for which the prophet calls. In the early days of Joshua this is the decision: "You must decide to whom you wish to cleave, to them or to Him; from this moment you are not entitled to think that you can do both together." Decision here is an absolute risk, on which one must stake one's whole life. The modernist finds it possible to get rid of this uncomfortable risk when he views prophetism as fulfilled in its "mature" development: is not monotheism achieved, the other gods unmasked as idols? The risk involved in the prophetic message is then no longer the absolute risk of faith involved in the particular decision, but only the moral risk of defending timeless ideals against the relativities of time. This is, of course, respectable enough; the world having always evil in it, he who fully commits himself to a moral ideal is almost always forced to be a hero. But the absolute risk of the earlier age has vanished in this formulation: the protagonist of the timelessly valid ideal always knows, if not that he will succeed, at least that he is right.

Yet, as Buber shows, prophetism even in its most universalistic form still contains an element of the same absolute risk existing in the early days of Joshua. For the prophet does not preach universally valid ideals abstracted from the situation; he speaks in and for the situation, and his demands are addressed to a specific people; and this involves a risk which can escape being tragic by nothing short of faith—the faith in the reality of the God-man encounter. The prophet must have the faith to believe what he "hears."

Buber comments profoundly on what beyond doubt constitutes the extremity of the prophetic situation: the danger of false prophecy. The decision and the risk now lies in this: what, in a concrete historical situation, is *His* prophecy? The agony which lies in this question cannot be suspected by those who, minimizing or denying the reality of the Encounter, make of the prophets preachers of universal ideals. The prophets find themselves in possession of no universal standard wholly adequate to distinguish between true and false prophecy. "It is not whether salvation or disaster is prophesied, but whether the prophecy, whatever it is, agrees with the divine demand meant by a certain historical situation that is important."

No doubt the prophet knows universal moral and religious principles to which a prophecy must conform if its claim to authenticity is to be even considered. But what, over and above those generalities, does God demand in the unique historical situation? What does He demand, not in general, but *here and now*? "The false prophets make their subconscious a god, whereas for the true prophets their subconscious is subdued by the God of truth." Who is to say when which is the case? An element of absolute risk remains ineradicable, precisely because the God of the prophets is not timeless only but enters into history.

Prophetic faith is unintelligible to a total rationalism. But this must be amplified. Prophetic faith is unintelligible to a total rationalism not because it contains an element of the "irrational": the irrational in religion is something which, depending on one's psychological interpretation of religion, one regards as indispensable or eliminates by "purification." Prophetic faith involves not the "irrational" but the extra-rational, i.e. extra-psychological: the prophet is confronted by the Other who, while becoming partly intelligible in His revelations, remains wholly Other in essence, i.e., not "irrational" but a mystery. Buber treats this point excellently in connection with YHVH's so-called "demonism." The contemporary Biblical critic regards the demonistic elements in the Bible as having "entered, as it were, by mistake from earlier polydemonism," thus enabling the liberal theologian to ignore them cavalierly. Buber rightly asserts that these elements are "of the essential stuff of early Biblical piety"

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and that, indeed, without them "the later form cannot be understood." God is wholly Other, and yet requires a total commitment: it is just this that gives the commitment a hazardous character which no subsequent intellectualization can wholly remove.

This review has concentrated on Buber's general approach rather than argued, as one could in many places, about critical details. This is partly because it is here that Buber's most significant contributions lie, but also for a reason which is more important. To understand the Bible, we have learned with Buber, one must take seriously the faith of Biblical man in the reality of the God-man encounter; but one need not, of course, share that faith. Nevertheless we can now ask: is it really beyond doubt that man always speaks to himself when he believes himself in dialogue with the Other? that human existence is closed? that Eternity cannot break into Time? If we learn to read the Bible from the standpoint of Biblical man, these questions might become genuine again, and we might end up reading the Bible, as it was once read, for genuine guidance—instead of using it, as we do now, for the odd decoration or reinforcement of views which are not the Bible's, but ours.

Freedom and Society

AUTHORITY AND THE INDIVIDUAL. By BERTRAND RUSSELL. Simon and Schuster. 79 pp. $2.00.

Reviewed by JIM CORK

PROFESSOR RUSSELL poses the basic problem he is to consider in his very first sentence: ". . . how can we combine that degree of individual initiative which is necessary for progress with the degree of social cohesion that is necessary for survival?" It is amazing how much salutary and relevant material he has succeeded in squeezing into this tiny booklet of seventy-nine pages, a reprint of six lectures broadcast over the BBC in England. This compactness is made possible by Russell's characteristic lucidity of thought and conciseness of expression. Yet, for all its suggestiveness, and despite the fact that all the important criticisms are made, all the pertinent questions asked, and the road indicated along which a solution might be found—all this with his customary epigrammatic brilliance—the results of the discussion are a bit disappointing.

Russell's picture of modern man shows him as the disenchanted figure we have become well acquainted with: the alienated soul, bewildered, pushed around by the huge, impersonal mechanism of modern society. In Eastern Europe man is almost completely deprived of his individuality as the object of direction and repression by an all-powerful, all-watchful state. In the West, though he still enjoys important freedoms, Leviathan increasingly limits the initiative of Mr. Average Citizen. Democratic rights tend to become more nominal than actual because of the increasingly larger scale on which our modern industrial society gets organized. Decisions affecting the most consequential things in life are in the hands of a few men, and the individual has no feeling whatsoever of participating in their making. He has no sense of belonging, whether in politics or industry. The majority of people, in their productive capacity, act merely as cogs in a huge, impersonal machine and work at tedious and spiritually debilitating jobs. Jangled nerves and tired bodies and dulled spirits turn for relief to the opiates of mass culture, which in time must desensitize and eventually atrophy all creative powers.

Russell would call a halt to all this. He would seek for principles of organization in industry and politics that would reverse the trend insofar as is humanly possible, recapture for the individual worker the feeling of personal satisfaction in work, and restore to everyone that precious sense of sharing in the making of life's vital decisions. Otherwise, Russell warns, the subtle dissatisfactions inevitably generated by rootless and uncreative lives may well turn into anti-social attitudes on a large scale. The weary, stale, and dissatisfied mood of the average citizen is a dangerous atom around which to build a civilized society.

In general, Russell advocates the decentralization of industry and society to the greatest extent compatible with a continuing stability and security. He urges the increase of local self-government and a return to the self-contained community where an individual can feel himself part of a living organism—which is impossible on a national scale. The worker, he argues, must be brought into active consultation and allowed to share in the direction of the particular industry in which he functions so that he can regain, at least partially, that sense of responsibility which is necessary to the appreciation of his own worth and dignity.

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THEORETICALLY, Russell's suggestions are persuasive and, though hardly new or startling, commendable. But how far they can be carried out is another matter. Our huge industrial edifice is here to stay. We cannot turn the clock back nor can we jump out of our own skins. It is well to recognize that the degree of amelioration possible along the lines advocated by Russell is probably very limited. Even his proposal for worker participation in the management of industry cannot by itself restore the zest of work to the miner or steelworker. The inherently dull and deadening nature of industrial work, unfortunately, cannot be changed. There is no point whatsoever in self-deception in this. We can, at best, only partially compensate those performing the less pleasant yet socially important tasks in our industrial setup by raising their wages proportionately and substantially lessening the number of hours demanded of them; the latter is a possibility that the scientific and technological advances of our age puts well within our reach. This would necessitate, of course, a basic shift from the assumptions underlying the competitive profit-motive type of society in which we now live to those that would underlie a more cooperative kind of society. Such considerations are entirely in line with the spirit of Russell's discussion, for in this book he writes essentially as a democratic socialist.

The most serious charge that can be made against this book is that nowhere in it does Russell make sufficiently clear the means he would propose to realize his aims. Assuming blithely for the moment that *vox populi* is *vox dei,* that it knows its own good and that its opinions are synonymous with ultimate social wisdom, how can it intervene decisively in the council halls of the world? To this question Professor Russell has no answer, and he lets us go away empty-handed, in spite of the stimulation and delight afforded us by his social idealism, his wit, his sanity.

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COMMENTARY
is printed by
THE COMET PRESS, INC.
200 Varick Street, New York 14, N. Y.
WAtkins 4-6700
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